

**THE  
AMERICAN NEGRO  
—  
THOMAS**

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# THE AMERICAN NEGRO

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# THE AMERICAN NEGRO

WHAT HE WAS, WHAT HE IS, AND WHAT  
HE MAY BECOME

A Critical and Practical Discussion

BY

WILLIAM HANNIBAL THOMAS

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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## **This Book**

WRITTEN IN THE HOPE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE  
RACE STILL FETTERED BY IGNORANCE OR SPIRITUAL  
BLINDNESS MAY BY ITS TEACHINGS BE INSPIRED TO  
NOBLE THOUGHTS AND DEEDS, IS DEDICATED TO ALL  
AMERICAN MEN AND WOMEN OF NEGROID ANCESTRY  
WHO HAVE GROWN TO THE FULL STATURE OF  
MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD





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## FOREWORD

THE title of this work is sufficiently explicit, I take it, to leave no room for doubt as to its general character, though there is a disposition in some quarters to use other terms than negro to designate that class of our people derived from African origin. For ordinary purposes, the inhabitants of this country may be fairly divided into white and colored classes. Nevertheless, such racial grouping is neither an exact nor a true ethnological designation of the American people, for the reason that it does not agree with known facts. For example, many persons of negroid ancestry, but white in color, are classed with the white race in communities ignorant of their negro origin. On the other hand, many Italians, Portuguese, Mexicans, and Indians, are dark complexioned, but without the least strain of negro blood. Therefore, as there is such a thing as a distinctively negro people, and as it is in indisputable evidence that the American freed people were primarily derived from a genuine negro stock, there is ample warrant for using the terms negro and negroid in designating the person, as well as the forms of thought and action, characteristic of the descendants of such ancestors.

The normal color of the negro is black, but that



color is neither his exclusive property nor his only hue. As a matter of fact, variant shades of color are found in his racial existence. Hence, neither the phrase, "negro people," nor its kindred appellatives, as employed in these pages, are to be understood as invariably implying a black segment of mankind, but rather as a uniform designation of a pronounced set of characteristics, specifically exemplified in the physical, mental, and moral qualities of a type of humanity. Color, then, apart from defined negroid characteristics, in nowise enters into the questions under consideration, though the characteristics themselves are manifest in white, black, yellow, brown, and other variable tints of racial color.

My contentions on this point are that any man, of whatever hue, who exhibits the characteristic traits which I shall hereafter describe is a negro ; otherwise, he is not. For example, I have some relatives who are fair in color, but negroes in every sense of the word, and other relatives, who, though dark in complexion, are in other respects comparatively free from negro idiosyncrasies. I have also personal knowledge of many individuals, representing all shades of color, who are manfully engaged in a struggle to free themselves from all visible trace of racial traits. Having submitted these observations, I hope to have made it clear that this contribution to American sociology deals in a fundamental sense with specific traits of character, and with color only in so far as it is incidental to ethnological characteristics.

I began this undertaking with a profound belief in the truth, "What man has thought, man can think; what man has felt, man can feel; what man has done, man can do;" nor have my labors lessened my faith in that direction. Therefore, in the trust that all negroid men and women, now hedged about with discouragements and hampered by privations, but, nevertheless, hungering and thirsting after the realities of true manhood and womanhood, may be encouraged to strive for the consummation of their ideals, I take them at once into my confidence, and give them a bit of my personal history. To such my narrative may bring cheer and success, when they come to know how one of their kith and kin, who was reared like themselves in the school of adversity, and in addition physically disabled at the dawn of manhood, throughout a lifelong struggle with adverse circumstances, in which he owed nothing to adventitious influences, not only acquired by discriminate reading and serious meditation on the great issues of life a fair degree of knowledge of men and things, but also found that every endowment of manhood or womanhood is within the reach of every human being who puts integrity before material gain and self-respect before mendacious folly.

None of my ancestors was owned in slavery, so far as my knowledge goes. On my mother's side I come from German and English stock. My maternal grandfather, the son of a white indentured

female servant by a colored man, was born at Bedford, Pennsylvania, about the year 1758. My maternal grandmother was a white German woman, born in 1770, and brought up at Hagerstown, Maryland. This branch of my ancestry emigrated to Ohio in 1792, and settled near the town of Marietta, where my mother was born, in 1812. On the paternal side, both of my grandparents, who were of mixed blood, were Virginians by birth. My father, who was born in the year 1808, near Moorfield, in Hardy County, removed to Ohio before attaining his majority. I was born on a farm, in a log cabin, on the fourth day of May, 1843, in Jackson Township, Pickaway County, Ohio. My earliest memories recall my father and mother with their circle of children gathered round the family fireside Sabbath afternoons engaged in reading the Scriptures, and recitations of the Decalogue and the Shorter Catechism. These wholesome teachings, including the morning orisons and evening prayers, with the never omitted supplication for "those who were in bonds," produced indelible impressions on my youthful mind, and exerted an abiding influence over my life.

This reference to the daily prayers for an enslaved class indicates that I was bred in an atmosphere of aversion to human bondage. Action, however, not speech merely, opened my understanding, and gave me positive convictions concerning life and liberty. For, as far back as I can remember, my parents' home was the rendezvous of escaping slaves, from



whose recital my childish heart drank in the miseries of human chattel. My father was an active conductor on the "Underground Railroad," and, besides sheltering and succoring slavery's unfortunate victims, spent many of his nights in transporting his passengers nearer to their haven of refuge. Nor was he alone in this respect; there were many others in that state, which was a chief gateway between slavery and freedom, to whom no panegyrics have been sung, and whose names are not emblazoned in historic annals, but who, nevertheless, put in jeopardy their lives and liberty, to protect and defend the fleeing subjects of an atrocious enthrallment and bear them well on the way to a land of freedom.

I came into this world a child of poverty, and my early days were spent in struggle for the maintenance of myself and others. Moreover, having no exceptional mental or physical traits, and inheriting the weakness as well as the strength which comes from even legitimate race admixture, I suffered the additional disadvantage of having been brought up in the seclusion of country life, and kept in ignorance of many things accounted wise. Therefore, when in my early youth, with scant human wisdom, I was suddenly thrust into contact with public activities, I had no guide but a slowly growing experience; which experience I found to be an inexorable teacher, one that never condoned a fault nor erased a blunder.

What I shall now say may appear incredible to this age of schools and students, for the enjoy-

ment of whose advantages I would have bartered half of my life ; and in this I am not alone, for there are still to be found a multitude of elderly men and women who, having passed through similar privation, like myself yearn to have possessed the wasted educational opportunities of the modern youth. In my day the country district school was a three months' affair, and at best afforded only the most rudimentary instruction. Moreover, it was not until my thirteenth year that I saw the inside of a schoolroom, when I spent eleven weeks in the first and only colored school I ever attended. My mother had early taught me reading, for which I soon developed an extraordinary fondness. Therefore, having read some books of history and travel, though I was chiefly familiar with the Bible, I found myself, when I entered upon my first school experience, ahead in intelligence of many who were twice my age. Two years passed before I was privileged to receive further instruction, when the opportunity came to me to enter a country district school, in which I remained twelve weeks ; that was during the years 1857-1858. The following winter I spent twelve weeks in an ungraded village school, the best of its kind in the vicinity, where I was admitted to the highest classes. In the spring of 1859 I hired myself to a small farmer, who engaged to pay for my services, and for whom I worked five months at eleven dollars a month. With these earnings, I was enabled, during the winter of 1859-1860, to spend ten weeks in study

in the preparatory department of Otterbein University, in Westerville, Ohio. Thus ended my preparatory school training, which gave me a fair knowledge of arithmetic, grammar, geography, and history.

During the memorable events of 1860 I was busy with farm labor, and also undertook to learn a mechanical trade, in which I was engaged when the war broke out in the spring of 1861. I immediately tendered my services to the government, but was refused on account of my color,—one of not a few instances where color has militated against me. After being refused admission to the army, I spent the summer of 1861 in teaching, supplying the place of the principal of the Union Seminary, which at that time was the sole academic school in America managed by negroes. In September of the same year I entered the 42d Ohio Infantry Regiment, in a civil capacity. The following winter I was in the Big Sandy campaign, with General Garfield, and during the summer of 1862 with the Union forces at Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. In the fall of that year our troops returned to Ohio, when I joined the 95th Regiment (then recruiting in Camp Chase), which was assigned to the Department of the Mississippi and which took a leading part in the Vicksburg campaign. I remained with this regiment until after the capture of Vicksburg, when I returned to Ohio and enlisted in the 5th United States colored troops, then in course of formation at Delaware, Ohio, and was appointed sergeant in Company I.



This colored regiment, commanded by Colonel Giles W. Shurtleff, who had previously been a professor in Oberlin College, was assigned to the Department of the James, where, during the summer of 1864, it bore a conspicuous part in the campaign before Petersburg and Richmond, and later on was sent to Fort Fisher. In its second expedition, under General Terry, resulted, as is well known, the capture of Fort Fisher. After that event we were sent up the Cape Fear River to destroy the intervening fortifications, and to occupy Wilmington, North Carolina. On the evening of the 21st of February, 1865, in an attack on the outer defences of that city, I received a gunshot wound in my right arm, which resulted in its amputation above the elbow, and my transfer North, where I spent five months in a hospital at Baltimore, Maryland.

On my discharge from the army I was induced to enter a Presbyterian seminary, where, though seriously handicapped by a lack of preparatory training, I studied theology, with fair acquittance, from 1865 to 1868. After leaving the seminary, I engaged for a while in religious newspaper work, and to my contact with the editor, the Rev. Daniel Shindler, a man of scholarship and of great moral worth, I attribute the awakening of my best impulses and highest aspirations. In 1871 I went South to organize schools and teach the freedmen, and in 1873 took up my residence in Newberry County, South Carolina, where, in January of the following year, after a rigid

examination, and in the face of strong opposition from the Southern white lawyers, I was licensed to practise law in the courts of that state. About the same time I was appointed a trial justice for the county in which I lived. It is due to myself to say that my knowledge of jurisprudence was acquired entirely from self-teaching. I had neither attended a law school nor received private instruction; yet I am led to believe that my success at the bar was not altogether discreditable.

In the autumn of 1876 I was elected a member of the legislature of South Carolina, and when that body convened I was made chairman of its leading committees. It may be added, as an historical fact, that during the stormy period that ensued, my services contributed in no slight measure to the settlement of the presidential issue of that year. About the same time that I was elected a state representative I was admitted to practise before the state Supreme Court, and also commissioned a colonel of the National Guard.

I have never regarded the political rights of the freedman as essential to his well-being, though I have no sympathy with the forcible methods which are employed to prevent his exercising them. When, therefore, the critical stage in reconstruction was reached, my conviction was confirmed by the ease with which the existing Republican governments of the South were overthrown, and it was then that I gave up the practice of law, and withdrew from

active participation in politics, in order that I might devote my chief attention to the educational and social advancement of the freedmen. In pursuance of that purpose I built churches, established school-houses, and created facilities for primary instruction in localities where such were before unknown. Nor did I cease endeavors better to observe and study the negro in every phase of his existence until I had visited every Southern state and community. In my varied experience in the South I have slept in bare cabins, sat on earthen floors, and eaten corn pone, and witnessed as much genuine self-respect in log huts as I have ever beheld in the most pretentious negro homes. I have kept step with the illiterate freedman as he pursued his daily round of toil in the field or forest, and sat in rapt attention at his hearth-stone at night while he recounted his own privations or drew vivid pictures of what he dreamed, but dared not hope, his children might become. I have also witnessed the ostentatious flauntings of negro pretensions in church, in the schoolroom, in social intercourse, and in material undertakings; and in not a few instances have been moved to righteous indignation at the insensate follies of a race blind to every passing opportunity. I have freely rendered unstinted service to the negro people without acquiring preferment or receiving reward; and, despite personal indignities and material losses, I have a consciousness that neither the malevolence of enemies nor the ingratitude of friends could move me to take a back-



ward step in the cause of humanity, or falter in my efforts for its amelioration.

I have now a word to say to a larger audience, — the American people, — because, in my judgment, the negro question embodies the most momentous problems that have engaged the attention of the nation. I think I have fairly diagnosed the racial situation, and have pointed out rational and efficient remedies for the elimination of race disabilities, by putting within the reach of those who desire to free themselves from the thralldom of inherited degradation means for regeneration. While nothing which I have written concerning the habits of the freedmen is new to the negroes themselves, who in their secluded gatherings show no reluctance to talk freely of themselves, yet so far as the white race is concerned there is very little first-hand knowledge regarding these topics. In fact, I doubt if any white person lives who has an adequate comprehension of negro characteristics, notwithstanding the many who descant glibly on the present and future of the freed people.

I know that few have any actual knowledge of their hidden lives and real living in their homes, churches, and social intercourse; especially of their individual hopes and fears, of opportunities denied them, of temptations besetting them, of prejudices they encounter, of victories they achieve. It is therefore obvious that the American white people have no intelligent insight into negro sociology; and it is

reasonable, to assume that, apart from the annual educational mendicant and the clerical beggar, the essential facts of negro life are as little known to the great mass of our people as they were three centuries ago. Furthermore, I make bold to say that no genuine attempt has been made, in any quarter, to know the negro as a freeman and as a citizen of our republican commonwealth. He has rights which are denied, as well as wrongs that have gone unredressed; and though he possesses many despicable traits that environment has accentuated, nevertheless his acknowledged exemplars have not all been saints, nor are his teachers altogether blameless for existing racial conditions.

Of course an intelligent public has a right to challenge all newcomers, and demand a show of credentials. I recognize the force and validity of the demand, and I ask but a fair hearing for what I have submitted, and an honest consideration for what I disclose. In preparing this work, I have not sought to vindicate any preconceived notions or prejudices of my own regarding its subject-matter, nor in arriving at my conclusions have I trusted to imperfect recollections or superficial observations. The sources from which my material has been drawn are carefully written notes, representing studies of the negro question in all its known phases, and reaching over a period of more than thirty years. I have had an extended experience in teaching the negro, one that brought me in contact with all grades of students and

covered every variety of instruction, and in which I learned that in memorizing and imitating the freed-man is unique, but that otherwise his intellectual powers are unawakened. In addition, a judicial experience of more than three years of daily official contact with every phase of civil and criminal litigation gave me an insight into negro peculiarities, such as could have been obtained in no other way, and I early discovered the absolute untrustworthiness of self-interested negro statement.

I have been a student of political history and participant in civic functions for more than three decades, having cast my first vote, for Abraham Lincoln, in 1864. During that time I have beheld the transition of the negro from chattelism to freedom, to enfranchisement, to legislative power, to dominating insolence, to riotous infamy; and through it all I have beheld his accredited leaders impervious to every thought or care for race, government, civilization, or posterity. From my youth I have had an intimate knowledge of negro religionists, and have learned to know by personal experience the shallowness of their pretensions, the depravity of their morals, the ignorance of their ministers, the bigotry of their leaders, and the levity of their faith. The social side of negro life has been to me an open page of execrable weakness, of unblushing shame, of inconceivable mendacity, of indurated folly and ephemeral contrition. In my analysis and comparison of facts, whether of negro depravity or negro



aspiration, I have seen everywhere the same fixed traces of an environing heredity cropping out through selfishness, insincerity, and servility as the bar sinister of negroology. I have found the unlearned bigoted; the learned of the race, pompous; and all, of every sort, pitifully indifferent to the welfare and uplifting of men and women sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death.

I am firmly rooted in the conviction that negroism, as exemplified in the American type, is an attitude of mental density, a kind of spiritual sensuousness; but that each of these characteristics, though endowed with great persistency and potency, is nevertheless amenable to radical treatment. On account of this belief I have pity and profound sympathy for an awakening group of negroes, to whom, in their blind gropings in the dark after a clew and thread to Godhood and manhood, I gladly reach out a hand of succor. On the other hand, I have a deep-seated aversion to and unfeigned disgust for a distinctive phase of negro stolidity characteristic of those bereft of all uplifting desire, because I know that they deliberately and of set purpose pander to every phase of racial viciousness and resist every attempt for social betterment. While all things are possible to those who work and wait with patient intelligence, still, I am fully satisfied that neither mental regeneration nor moral transformation will ever come to the freed people until, shorn of illusions, their depravity, ignorance, and bitter mockeries of all that is real and

earnest in life are laid bare to their vision and brought home to their consciousness.

Two things, however, ought to be understood. One is, that the admitted degradation of the race is not characteristic of all persons of negroid ancestry; the other, that the common, indiscriminate inclusion of all persons of color in the same category is an unjust classification, which acts with great severity against a saving remnant of good men and true women. It is, therefore, a grave mistake on the part of the general public to assume that all freed-men are alike in character and conduct. The great majority, it is true, have all the defects and weaknesses attributed to them; but it is also a fact that good and true men and women are to be found among them. There are women of virtuous lives and consecrated living; mothers of integrity and daughters of chastity. There are also veracious men of tried integrity, whose lives are of honest worth, and whose moral stability is often obscured by the audacious intrusion of brazen cant.

These discussions cover a wide range of thought. I have refrained, however, from indulging in any elaborate analysis of the several phases which this question assumes, since that would be foreign to the fundamental purpose, that is, to build a feasible structure over the chasm which divides the negro as he is from that which he may become. In giving publicity to these facts, I am actuated neither by prejudice, sentiment, cravenness, nor egotism, but

moved simply and solely by an intense desire to awaken the negro people out of their sleep of death. I have sought to show the depth of negro degradation, the height of negro achievement, in the hope that, stripped of all glosses and shams, the race would be moved to gird itself anew with the garb of truth and righteousness. If what I have stated to be realities are untrue, they should be re-stated ; if my declarations are misleading, they should be corrected. No mere denial will impeach the validity of what is here set forth, for facts must be met with facts.

I shall expect, and gladly welcome, intelligent and honest criticism. Of the other sort, there will doubtless come a chorus of vapid whimperings, from those who know that race awakening means renunciation of shams and the overthrow of knavish guidance. But of what inspiration have the clerical or political negro leaders of America ever been to their racial brethren ? What sane suggestions have they made, or unselfish service rendered, which would commend them to the merited approbation of mankind ? I also anticipate denunciation at the hands of the white quacks and tricksters in politics, churches, and schools, who are now profiting by negro credulity, and to whom an exalting of racial ideals means dethronement, and a loss of pecuniary gain. On the other hand, this analysis of the freedman's characteristics, with its accompanying suggestions, should prove of helpful and timely assistance to the honest and self-effacing teacher or preacher of either race.



It is possible that there may be freedmen who will read this book in a mood of resentment toward the writer and with anger at its disclosures. Should there be any so unwise, they are kindly advised to re-peruse it in a spirit of calmness, and with a purpose to know the truth and all of the truth as it relates to themselves and others of their race. Furthermore, should there be any who have a disposition to controvert these conclusions, or deny that my criticisms of the freedman are warranted by existing facts, such persons should understand that it rests with them to make good whatever pretensions to the contrary they may set up. They must demonstrate beyond a reasonable doubt that the negro is a superior being to that which I have made him out to be, and one already endowed with actual and useful ability. Moreover, so long as the general average of race capacity is of an admittedly low order, the required proofs will not be furnished by bringing forward exceptional cases of individual development. On the other hand, if the facts are with me, it obviously becomes the highest duty of every man, imbued with the spirit of truth, to preach the gospel of immediate and unconditional race redemption. In no other way can wisdom and strength be acquired by the negro people. This fundamental obligation exists, nor can it be lightly evaded, even should it come to pass that the mass of the freedmen refuse to have a more abundant life, and, with deliberate intent, "stone

their prophets and crucify their redeemers." Finally, as the crux of this whole issue is clearly to ascertain whether negro regeneration is possible or impossible, it should be realized that it rests chiefly with the freedman himself to determine what he may become, and, therefore, what the character of his race conditions is to be in social and civic relations.

THE AMERICAN NEGRO





# THE AMERICAN NEGRO

## CHAPTER I

### ALIEN CHATTELISM

AFRICAN slavery is the oldest of all known systems of chattelism, and, as the earliest records show, was universal in the dark continent. From the dawn of commerce and civilization slaves were its chief commodity of exchange with foreign peoples. India, Persia, Babylon, Arabia, Phœnicia, the Hebrews, Greece, and Rome trafficked in negro slaves, exchanging their spices, wine, silks, jewels, linen, and tapestry for sable bondmen. But in the last four centuries the Arabs and the Portuguese have been the foreign slave factors of Africa, the former supplying the Eastern, and the latter the Western, slave markets of the world, which, until slavery was abolished in our hemisphere, consisted of North, South, and Central America, as well as the West Indian Islands. Negro slaves had been brought into Spain as early as 1480 A.D., and that government deported a large number of them to the Island of Hayti, near the close of the fifteenth century. To Spain, therefore, belongs the execrable dishonor of having introduced human chat-

telism into the New World, though Sir John Hawkins, the first Englishman to engage in negro slave trading, took a number of slave cargoes to the West Indian Islands during the early part of the latter half of the sixteenth century, at great financial profit to himself and his royal partner, the Virgin Queen.

The discoveries in North America by Cabot in 1497 led, a little more than a century later, to the permanent establishment of two English colonies on these shores. Both of these colonial ventures were small in numbers and ill-equipped for coping with the hardships of a hostile environment. Nevertheless, they have exerted a profound influence upon the development and destiny of the American people, as well as of the whole English-speaking world. It was the success of the American colonial plantings which led to English enterprises in Australia and South Africa.

The Jamestown and Plymouth colonies proved of the greatest import to the American nation. Each of these movements contained the germs of an undeveloped civilization; through them two mighty forces, distinct in character and antagonistic in purpose, germinated at the same period in the Western World. The basis on which the Plymouth ideal grounded its convictions was individual industry and civic freedom; while the foundation of the Jamestown polity was an idle gentry served by inferior dependants. The Jamestown colony consisted of less than seventy-five persons, forty-eight of whom were "gentlemen,"

who, idle, dissolute, and mercenary, had come to America to mend their fortunes, some of them to escape punishment for crime. The rest of the colony, including a few mechanics, were laborers brought out to serve these impoverished scions of nobility. On the other hand, the Plymouth colony, consisting of one hundred persons, was composed of earnest, God-fearing men and women who had braved the deep, and buried themselves in a bleak and barren wilderness for conscience' sake, girt from the beginning with indomitable courage and indefatigable industry, and to whom idleness was a crime and immorality an unpardonable sin. The Puritan came to these shores to establish a home, to rear a family, to perpetuate a God-given faith. The Cavalier brought no family; the New World was to him a place where he might gather wealth to enrich an English home. By keeping these distinctions in mind we may form a very clear conception of the inchoate conditions of colonial civilization at a time when a formidable factor made its appearance, one which for more than two centuries afterward swayed the destinies of the American people.

The English settlement at Jamestown, Virginia, was founded May 13, 1607, by the London Trading Company. Twelve years later the first cargo of negro slaves purchased by English colonists was landed there, in the month of August, 1619. It is a popular but erroneous notion that the first negro slaves employed in this country were those brought to



Jamestown. The first African slaves ever brought to the mainland of the North American continent were imported into Florida by the Spaniards during the sixteenth century. The Spanish colonists who attempted in the same century to establish a settlement on Jamestown Island, Virginia, were accompanied by negro slaves. On the English side, however, four great epoch-making events are chronicled in the seventeenth-century evolutions of the American people: the settlement of Jamestown, in 1607; the introduction of negro slavery, in 1619; the advent of the Puritans, in 1620; and the importation of the cotton seed, in 1621.

The early settlers of America were met at every turn by tremendous obstacles and inconceivable hardships; there was danger by day and terror by night from a savage foe. The soil on which they depended for subsistence was covered by a dense forest which could only be removed by slow and laborious processes. Many of the immigrants were thriftless and shiftless in the matter of self-support, though for the most prudent and industrious the stress and strain of living was intense. Now at the time of which we write the system of indentured labor was common in England, and the condition of its poor one of extreme poverty. The yearly wages of a ploughman were fifty shillings; those of an ordinary workman, forty shillings; a skilled domestic female received twenty-six shillings; an ordinary drudge, sixteen shillings. The residence of each laborer was confined to his parish.

His wages were fixed by the landowners; the price of his food, which consisted mostly of brown bread and cheese, by the producers and tradesmen. At some seasons of the year many were compelled to rely on the offerings of charity for actual existence.

The condition of the English poor created an economic problem which only the American colonies seemed destined to solve. With this end in view the London Company sent out to Virginia a number of indentured laborers, who were under agreement to serve a specified time in payment of the cost of their transportation. The average term of service for a white indentured servant was seven years, though in all other respects he was held upon precisely the same conditions as the black slave, for both were completely subject to the will of their masters, and to the same moral and social influence. But in less than a score of years after their first introduction, white servants were exported to the colonies as a species of merchandise, and were dealt with as any other article of commodity. Moreover, such was the scarcity of labor and the pecuniary inducements held out, that many poor people sold themselves in order to reach these shores. A census taken in 1625 shows that there were, at that date, 464 white servants and 22 negro slaves in the Virginia colony. Forty years later there were more than six thousand white indentured servants in the same section.

Nor was this species of human chattelism confined to Virginia, for, notwithstanding the introduction of

negro slaves, it is reliably estimated that as late as 1680, of the great number of youthful persons sent to the colonies as indentured servants, the larger portion of them were procured by felonious means. High authorities assert that not less than ten thousand of the youth of both sexes were annually abducted from English homes. All of them did not reach the colonies, for many of them died on the passage out, owing to the scant provision made for their care and the brutality of the shipmasters. In the middle and latter part of the seventeenth century a large number of free mulattoes were to be found in Virginia as indentured servants. These are readily accounted for, for all bastard children, born of white women by negro men, were bound out by the church wardens until they reached the age of thirty years. There were also a considerable number of Turkish and Indian servants as well as of French, German, and other European races held in the same way.

American negro slavery is always to be considered under two distinct aspects: first, as an economic institution; second, as a political force. Whenever, therefore, these distinctions are omitted, no sane conclusions respecting slavery can be reached. At its inception negro slavery was purely an economic device for bettering the condition of the planters; the white servant was held for a short period and then released. The negro was bound for life, and from the start suffered no inconvenience from the climate. He was lusty and stalwart; his food and



clothing cost less than those of a white servant ; and in most cases he was more docile and tractable. African slavery, therefore, was not based on color, but service, and in domestic management there was no distinction made between black slaves and white indentured servants.

In Virginia tobacco was the staple product ; in the Carolinas, cotton and rice. Agriculture demanded personal oversight and manual effort. Negro slaves supplied this latter want, yet it is noteworthy that, thirty years after their advent, they did not exceed three hundred in number ; in fact, negro slavery made its way here by slow stages. It was fully a half-century before it can be fairly said it obtained a foothold. By the close of the seventeenth century, however, slavery was firmly rooted in all of the then existing colonies. In 1790 the number of slaves in the United States had increased to about 700,000, of whom 40,000 were in the North, with New York leading off with 21,000 black bondmen, the remaining 660,000 being distributed among the then six Southern states, and the territory which included Tennessee and Kentucky.

Negro slavery, then, began its career in this country as a factor in colonial industrial economy. The negroes were brought here to toil, and their forced industry was the earliest uplifting influence which that race encountered in the New World. But in those days slaves were treated in a somewhat kindly manner by their masters, and were instructed in the



Christian religion, for both the Huguenot and Puritan slave-owners believed themselves to be special instruments of providence for the conversion of the world, and held that slavery was one of the God-ordained means for bringing both the Indian and African heathen into fellowship with the elect. Hence, master and slave sat in the same church, listened to the same sermon, partook of the same sacrament, mingled their prayers together at the same altar, sang the same songs, and were amenable to the same Christian polity. Moreover, the notion extensively prevailed that the baptism of negroes released them from servitude, nor was this feeling allayed until the Crown Act of 1669 affirmed that the baptism of negroes did not invalidate the master's rights. It is also in evidence that no free negro from a Christian country could be enslaved.

The climate of the South is mainly sub-tropical. It is preëminently an agricultural section, and specially adapted to raising cotton, sugar, and tobacco, all profitable products. Hence, as its whites were too indolent to work, and its blacks too feeble to resist, human chattelism spread rapidly in a section whose fertile soil had long awaited the advent of sturdy, docile toilers. Moreover, as slavery extended southward it largely parted with its fostering domestic features; the slave-owners became rapacious for slaves and territory, and their greed was not appeased until Florida, Louisiana, and Texas were added to the national domain.

Several causes contributed to the growth and permanence of slavery, the most notable being the invention of the cotton-gin by Whitney, — an event which gave a tremendous impetus to the culture of the cotton plant, necessitated a vast increase in the productive forces of agriculture, and led to increased activity in the importation of African negroes. For, in consequence of this invention, it is estimated that no less than a half-million of them were imported into the United States between the years of 1793 and 1808, the latter being the date at which the foreign slave traffic became illegal. But neither of these causes would have greatly affected the perpetuity of slavery, had not other controlling factors been enlisted in its behalf. The erection of mills in the New England states, for the manufacture of raw cotton into cotton cloth enlisted a powerful interest on the side of slavery, which, together with its commercial alliances, religious support, and legal protection, intrenched it in what appeared to be an impregnable fortress. The Southern slaveholders strenuously objected to the presence of manufacturing industries, on the ground that they would destroy slavery, and that already slave mechanics were half free. They also prevented the education of the poor whites, who outnumbered the slave autocrats ten to one. They were also stubbornly opposed to elevating negro labor above the crudest performance, notwithstanding the fact that ignorant and superficial cultivation speedily exhausted the soil. With

chattelism finally established, there of necessity arose class distinctions, with the inevitable result that the government passed into the hands of its landed aristocrats.

The security of slavery rested on two fundamental conditions, viz. that there should be no instruction of the slave, and no discussion of the evils of slavery by white men. Slaves had no legal personality. The law of Louisiana said they should be considered as real estate, and that they could possess nothing, and acquire nothing but what belonged to their masters. On the other hand, the law of South Carolina declared that slaves should be decreed and adjudged in law to be chattels personal. The legislation in the other slave states was similar, though the greater number regarded slaves as chattel property. The slave code of the South was based on the Institutes of Justinian; but, while ancient slaveholding nations subjugated their slaves by fetters and death, the slaveholders of America kept their slaves in submission by debasing their minds and morals, and dominating their persons with execrable legal atrocities.

The following extracts are taken from the slave legislation of the South: "Any person who shall attempt to teach any free person of color or slave to spell, read, or write, shall, upon conviction thereof, be imprisoned not less than one or more than twelve months;" a statute of Louisiana. "Teaching slaves to read and write tends to excite dissatisfaction in



their minds and to produce insurrection and rebellion ; therefore, if any person shall give or sell to any slave a Bible, tract, or book of any kind, such person, if white, shall be punished with a fine of two hundred dollars, and if a free negro, with thirty-nine lashes on the bare back ;” the law of North Carolina. The law of South Carolina punished any slave found receiving mental instruction with severe castigation and his instructor with a fine of five hundred dollars. These excerpts are not exceptions ; every slave commonwealth made the mental instruction of the slave a crime and his teacher a criminal. Not only was the mental enlightenment of the slave inhibited, but all morality set at naught by the mandate of the law. The code of Louisiana declared that “slaves could not contract matrimony,” that their sexual association was “a relation without sanctity, and to which no civil rights adhere.” The law of slavery was that slaves were not amenable to church or state for incontinence or adultery, since they were not bound by marital ties nor subjected to their obligations.

The legal iniquities of slavery reached the climax of audacity in its criminal code. The universal law of negro slavery declared that “If any slave shall presume to strike any white person, such slave may be lawfully killed.” Slaves were mutilated and killed at the pleasure of their owners whenever, in their judgment, their safety required it, and no punishment, even in the most aggravated cases, was inflicted other than the imposition of a trifling fine. When a



non-slaveholding white killed a negro, payment of the price of the bondman was his acquittance; in no case was imprisonment or the death penalty inflicted. Slavery *per se*, upheld and fostered as it was in this country by an ostensibly free government, and justified and participated in by its free subjects, could not do otherwise than produce a monstrous aberration of the sense of human right.

The contact of whites and blacks in the relation of master and servant corrupted both races. The physical depravity of the enslaved negro exerted a pernicious influence on the white masters; it corrupted their language, warped their moral vision, and swept away the decent and orderly restraints which civilized society imposes on its members. Moral integrity was set aside, the caprice of the individual substituted. Slave-owners became self-indulgent, brutal and lustful, masterful in speech, audacious in action; and throughout the whole saturnalia of chattelism the whites sunk as the blacks rose in moral stamina, for the latter acquired, through the church and social regulations of the plantation, some knowledge of the duties and obligations of moral living.

The condition of the negro during slavery is thus graphically described by De Tocqueville: "The negro of the United States has lost all remembrance of his country; the language which his forefathers spoke is never heard around him; he abjured their religion and forgot their customs when he ceased to belong

to Africa, without acquiring any claim to European privileges. He was sold by the one, repulsed by the other; violence made him a slave, and the habits of servitude gave him the thoughts and desires of a slave; he admires his tyrants more than he hates them, and finds his joy and his pride in the servile imitation of those who oppress him; his understanding is degraded to the level of his soul, and he quietly enjoys the privilege of his debasement." This luminous portrayal of negro nature is as true to-day, after thirty years of freedom, as when it was written by this keen-witted Frenchman.

It may be said that human bondage was not instituted to develop and cultivate the mental and moral qualities of those who were imported to toil and propagate their kind, especially where mercenary greed deliberately set aflame negro sensuality. Slavery, we know, caressed productive wantonness, and flogged barren prudery in its mad strife to increase human herds for traffic and use. We also know that moral integrity was impossible while the slaves lived in an atmosphere tainted with sensuous corruption. Furthermore, we know that just in proportion as the restraints of racial contact were removed, the corruption of white society increased, a fact conclusively established by millions of negroes whose blood is mixed with that of their masters. But whether in slavery or out of it, moral deterioration is sure to follow in any race or individual gifted with high social development, when contact with another lower

in the scale of civilization is unrestrained and of indefinite duration.

But while slavery wrought immeasurable evil in the white slaveholding class of the South, its positive iniquities bred a moral debasement in negro women, without parallel in modern annals, and whose consummate degradation was reached during our Civil War. It may have been the outcroppings of gratitude to Federal victors, or reckless abandon to lust, but the inciting cause is immaterial, so long as the shameful fact is true, that, wherever our armies were quartered in the South, the negro women flocked to their camps for infamous riot with the white soldiery. All occupied cities, suburban rendezvous, and rural bivouacs, bore witness to the mad havoc daily wrought in black womanhood by our citizen soldiery. We have personal knowledge of many Federal officers of high station, and some of strong prejudices against the race, who openly kept negro mistresses in their army quarters; nor do we doubt that the present lax morality everywhere observable among negro womenkind is largely due to the licentious freedom which the war engendered among them. Slavery had its blighting evils, but also its wholesome restraints.

Negro slavery was a many-sided affair, for at one and the same time it constituted a political force, an industrial factor, an ethical agency, a social institution, and a domestic feature. The character of the slaves themselves was largely affected by these sev-



eral phases of enthrallment. For example, the negroes coarse in speech and crude in action were assigned to labor in the field and forest; they were under the control of a white overseer who was assisted in his duties by negro drivers; men and women were herded together in work each with a definite assigned task. They were bound to a limited sphere of activities, which the least intelligence sufficed to execute, and where neither experience nor knowledge gave them a choice of methods. In the plantation social system field labor was its penal colony, and to be transported thither from other vocations was, in the eyes of the slaves, the most degrading punishment to which they could be subjected.

A favored class was the domestic servants employed in various capacities in the homes of the planters. These were usually bright and intelligent negroes, who, through contact and sympathetic supervision, acquired in many instances a training in manners and methods of incomparable grace and efficiency. Another equally intelligent, but more self-reliant class, was the slaves employed in portage in commercial centres, together with many others engaged in occupations which required little supervision, but a fair degree of personal intelligence and practical judgment to perform rightly. But the superior slave class, and the one which represented all that was best in negro development, was the mechanics who were in most cases conspicuous for their ability and achievements, for slavery included among its mechan-



ical industries every form of handicraft, and as the ability to acquire a mechanical art carries with it a fair degree of intelligence, it is not surprising that negro artisans, who were carefully selected for their special lines of work, should have developed characters superior to their less fortunate fellows.

From the formation of the Union slavery was, in authority and influence, an aggressive force and dominating factor in the national government. The evidence in support of this is found in the Ordinance of 1787, providing for the return of fugitive slaves; in the compromises of the Federal Constitution with slavery, viz.: the organic recognition of a class of bondmen; the provision for the rendition of fugitives of that class to their masters; the concession that three-fourths of them should be counted in the apportionment for Congressional representation, a concession which gave the South representation for property, and by which the vote of the owner of five hundred slaves equalled that of three hundred non-slaveholding white citizens; finally, by the extension of the slave trade for twenty years from the formation of the Federal government.

The direct legal responsibility of the nation for slavery is established by the treaty made with the Creek Indians, in 1790, in which they agreed to return the runaway slaves among them. By the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, which permitted the owner of a runaway to recover his slave in any state to which he had fled. By the act governing the

District of Columbia, which affirmed that the laws of Virginia and Maryland should respectively remain in force. By the direct affirmation of Congress, that "The legal presumption is, that persons of color going at large without evidence of their freedom are absconding slaves, and *prima facie* liable to arrest as such;" that if a free man of color should be apprehended as a runaway, "he is subject to the payment of all fees and rewards, given by law, for the apprehending of runaways, and upon failure to make such payment, is liable to be sold as a slave." By permitting slavery, in 1798, to be extended in the territory ceded by Georgia and North Carolina. By the Treaty of Ghent, whereby the English were required to pay to the United States \$1,200,000 for the benefit of Southern slaveholders, whose negroes had escaped to the English army. By the invasion of Spanish Florida, for the express purpose of recovering Georgia fugitive negroes. By the Missouri Compromise, which was a clear and unequivocal Federal recognition of slavery. By the acquisition of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, and the legal authorization of slavery therein, as well as in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi. By judicial defence of slavery by the United States Supreme Court, as shown in the celebrated Dred Scott decision, wherein it was affirmed that the Missouri Compromise was not warranted by the Constitution, and was therefore null and void, that negroes were not included in the word "citizen" employed in the Con-

stitution, and that they were regarded as an inferior order of beings, altogether unfit for association with white men, in social or political relations, and therefore might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for the benefit of white men.

That slavery was a national institution, recognized and protected by the Constitution, by foreign treaties, by Federal legislation, and by judicial decisions, is a fundamental fact. It is equally true that from the foundation of the government up to 1860 no act inimical to slavery was ever enacted into law by the Congress of the United States. The Missouri Compromise may be cited as an instance to the contrary, but all the facts connected therewith show that, while the bill was introduced by a Northern Senator, it was admittedly a Southern measure, and enacted by Southern voters in the belief that it would efficiently check the spread of free institutions southward.

During the decade between 1850 and 1860 slavery was more popular in the South than at any previous period. The foreign slave trade was openly pursued. It is officially stated that at least forty slavers, whose net annual profits exceeded \$15,000,000, were annually fitted out in the United States, chiefly from the port of New York. Moreover, near the close of this decade, the whole South was engaged in efforts to secure through national legislation a reopening of the African slave trade. In fact, never in the history of the nation had slavery been so aggressive in demands, so unyielding in purpose, as



in 1861, when, for the first time, it had absolute right and security in all the states and territories by national legislation. But perhaps no single legislative act so significantly exemplified the paramount influence of the slave barons in national affairs, as the fact that, notwithstanding the open rebellion of several of the slave states, an amendment to the constitution was adopted by both Houses of Congress in January, 1861, and its submission for ratification to the several states ordered, which provided for the perpetual observance of the Fugitive Slave Act, the protection of slavery in all states and territories, and further provided that no subsequent amendment to the Constitution should ever be made that would impair these obligations or permit Congress to legislate adversely to slavery. This crowning injury and wanton surrender of freedom to slavery was heartily supported by many Republican members who have since become conspicuous in the councils of the nation, and, strange to say, two states, Ohio and Maryland, gave their assent to it.

In its later moods, slavery stood on the ground that negro chattelism was an essential element of a high civilization, and, in support of its pretensions, enlisted the activities of the ostensible Christian teachers of the South, most of whom owned slaves, and who deliberately taught from the pulpit and through the religious press that slavery was not only right in itself, but that it was a God-ordained institution. Nor was this the only class who supported



this monstrous iniquity. The American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, together with all other distinctly religious organizations North and South, with the exception of the Society of Friends, the Methodist Protestant, and the United Brethren churches, were at one period distinctly committed to the support of negro slavery.

The religious sentiment of the country therefore constituted one of the chief bulwarks of the slave system, a statement amply justified by even the most cursory examination of American sectarian history. For instance, the Episcopal Church, at that time representing the wealth and culture of the country, was proslavery to the core. The Presbyterian Church, after much internal dissension over the question of its communicants and ministers holding slaves, separated into a Northern and a Southern wing in 1837. And the church of John Wesley, whose founder had proclaimed slavery to be the "sum of all villanies," was, a few years later, rent in twain by a slaveholding faction led by a slaveholding bishop. Nor was the Baptist Church one whit behind its sectarian brethren in defending the enthrallment of the blacks. Moreover, while in all denominations negro slaves were included among their communicants, none of them permitted their black brethren to testify in church tribunals against white members, it mattered not how heinous were the crimes they had committed against the person of the negro.

But while the American slave system had not the

slightest shred of moral justification, yet, if we would be just in our conclusions respecting it, we must needs distinguish between slavery and slaveholding. Slavery, in itself, had no moral status, but slaveholding had in many instances commendable and extenuating features. Every master, the good and the bad, had at his disposal the services and life of his slave. In the long run absolute power will corrupt the best human beings. But candor compels us to say that there were many examples of Southern slaveholders who in their treatment of their black bondmen were actuated by a lofty sense of duty and principles of Christian benevolence. To be sure, they were part and parcel of an odious system, and to that extent their beneficent activities were checked; still, for all that, their wholesome examples and generous deeds left an indelible impress upon many negro men and women, who were ennobled thereby.

Nor has the universal kinship of humanity ever been more fitly realized than in the results achieved in negro bondage. Despite its barbarities, slavery wrought a salutary transformation in the negro race. It made rational men out of savage animals, and industrious serfs out of wanton idlers. It found the negro rioting in benighted ignorance, and led him to the threshold of light and knowledge. It clothed nakedness in civilized habiliments, and taught a jungle idolater of Christ and immortality. Moreover, paradoxical as it may appear, many a negro slave man was girt with a freedom of mind and nobility

of soul far beyond anything his master comprehended ; for, just as the maimed Phrygian slave, Epictetus, embalmed his name in immortality, while that of his master lies buried in oblivion save for that one brutal act, so some American negro slaves have carved out for themselves fame, while their white owners are numbered among the unknown.

But, in order to form a direct estimate of the Southern slave-owner, it is necessary to take into account the hereditary traits and religious beliefs of the original settlers, which, as a matter of course, had a profound bearing on their future domestic economy. Virginia was settled by English adherents of the Episcopal Church, and later was noted for its aristocratic landed gentry. North Carolina, settled by the Scotch-Irish and Quakers, was not only democratic in sentiment, but was the first of the thirteen colonies to declare for independence and strike a blow in defence of civic freedom. South Carolina, peopled by Cavaliers and Huguenots, developed an imperious aristocracy, whose social organism rested on negro slavery and white domination. Florida and Louisiana had each a social condition peculiar to itself. All of the Southern commonwealths, therefore, developed certain characters, which during centuries underwent but slight change. Practically, each of them grew, separated by broad distinctions and pronounced traits from its neighbors, with the characteristics of ancestors faithfully transmitted to descendants, which characteristics, through the isolation of plantation



life and the intermarriage of a segregated people, gave tone and color to its sectional impulse. It is not surprising that unique traits were developed in a people free from restraints and yet possessed of strong notions of despotic power, which the early introduction of negro slavery gave them an opportunity to exercise, and the continuance of which undoubtedly exerted a tremendous influence upon the individual character of the slaveholding class.

This discussion would be lacking in completeness were not attention directed to the influence which negro bondage exerted on the white women of the South, who in many respects are unlike their Northern sisters. Between the two no fair comparison could be instituted. This much, however, may be said, without involving the least implication of sinister motive. The Southern white women are essentially indolent; their environment invites repose, and under the influence of the slave régime many of them sank into effeminate sensuousness or became vindictive and cruel. And yet we have evidence of numberless instances of moral heroism exhibited by Southern women under conditions that would have reflected credit on the rarest Spartan courage. What is immediately relevant to the matter in hand, however, is the effect which the obvious immoralities of negro enthrallment produced upon the women of the master class. Human nature is essentially the same the world over, and the presumption is inconceivable that Southern white women were not susceptible to



the licentious carnival which rioted about them, for before their eyes fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons revelled with slave concubines. That it dulled their moral sensibilities cannot be denied; that it aroused resentment is to be inferred, though we have seen the wives of white planters tenderly caring for the negro illegitimates of their husbands, and showering a wealth of affection upon them — altogether unlike the inconsistency of Sarah, which made Hagar an outcast and her child a desert marauder. If nothing else may be said, this is self-evident, the licentiousness of slavery made these women tolerant of social lapses and conjugal unfaithfulness, wherever indulged in with what they conceived to be an inferior race. In so doing they have dishonored all womankind. Nor does it extenuate their guilt to say of them that they have maintained for themselves an unsullied standard of social purity. In any attestation of their own chastity their selfish indifference to the social impurity about them is made apparent. Nor does their culpability end here, inasmuch as their neglect to inculcate and enforce their own conception of moral living on their women dependants has wrought untold social mischief among the black women of the South, and contributed in no slight degree toward unsettling the foundations of Southern society. When all the facts incident thereto are weighed and adjusted, we must conclude, if we would be candid, that slavery has wrought as great evil to the whites as to the blacks.

## CHAPTER II

### DECRETAL FREEDOM

WHILE the suppression of the African slave trade was largely brought about by an enlightened public, indignant at its remorseless barbarities, whose interest in the subject extended no farther than its cessation, there were not wanting those far-sighted enough to realize that a suppression of the African slave trade rendered the ultimate extinction of slavery inevitable. The suppression of the foreign traffic, therefore, was followed by vigorous efforts for the emancipation of the domestic enslaved. In the American slaveholding countries negro emancipation took place in Mexico in 1829, in the English West Indian possessions in 1834, and in the French colonies in 1848. Portugal issued a decree, in 1858, which provided that after a lapse of twenty years her slaves should be free. The Dutch freed their slaves in 1863. The Spanish Cortes passed an act for the gradual emancipation of the negro slaves in Cuba in 1870, and the Brazilian government approved of a similar measure in 1871.

From the advent of the first cargo of negro slaves in America, down to the day of the eradication of human chattelism, there were those who doubted

the expediency of slave labor and were opposed to its existence. The question of negro emancipation ante-dated the formation of the Federal Union, and in its earlier stages found many strong supporters both in the North and South. Among the latter were many large slave-owners. The decisive objection raised to negro emancipation, at least the one that appears to have had the most weight in deciding the matter adversely, was the alleged fear of revolt and retaliation on the part of the freed negroes for real or fancied wrongs committed against them during their enslavement. Another objection, which was also strongly urged against such a movement, was that negro emancipation would produce immediate and widespread amalgamation of the races. That either objection could have been sincerely entertained by a sober-minded generation appears, in the light of subsequent events, to border on the absurd. The matter of retaliation has always been out of the question; and as for race amalgamation, slavery is the responsible factor in negro race admixture.

That a strong antislavery sentiment obtained in all the colonies during the progress of the Revolutionary War is attested by their legislative acts. Delaware, in 1776, adopted a new constitution prohibiting any further importation of negro slaves, and removing all restraints upon emancipation. Maryland did the same in 1783. So likewise New Jersey, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Pennsylvania declared that no slaves should be brought into that



state after 1780; that all negro citizens born after that date should be free. Massachusetts abolished slavery, not by direct enactment, but under a Supreme Court decision in 1780. New York, in 1785, enacted that all children of slaves thereafter born should be free, and have the same rights as other freemen. Both Georgia and South Carolina united in prohibiting traffic in the African slave trade, and in the latter state that prohibition was not repealed until 1803.

The ablest statesmen of the revolutionary and constitutional period of United States history, advocated the emancipation of slaves. Washington said, "The abolition of slavery must take place, and that, too, at a period not remote," and showed the courage of his convictions by emancipating his own slaves. Jefferson uttered these words in reference to negro slavery, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep forever." Madison declared that it was "wrong to admit into the Constitution even the idea that there could be property in man." Patrick Henry affirmed, "That we owe it to the purity of our religion to show that it is at variance with the law which warrants slavery, and it would rejoice my very soul to know that every one of my fellow-beings was emancipated." Robert Morris, in the Constitutional Convention, declared slavery to be "a nefarious institution." The celebrated Dr. Rush declared slavery to be "repugnant to the principles of Christianity, and rebellion against the author-



ity of a common Father"; and William Pinckney, in 1789, boldly affirmed in the Maryland House of Delegates, that, "By the eternal principles of natural justice, no master in this state has a right to hold his slave for a single hour." Luther Martin, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention from Maryland, opposed the adoption of the Constitution on the ground that it contained no express provision against slavery; and General Lee of Virginia lamented that no provision was made in the document for the gradual abolition of slavery; while Judge Tucker of the same state, in a letter to its General Assembly, recommending the abolition of their slaves, said, "It is our first duty to effectuate so desirable an object, and to remove from us a stigma, with which our enemies will never fail to upbraid us, nor our consciences to reproach us." In the Virginia convention, called together for the ratification of the Federal Constitution, Mr. Johnson said, "The principle of emancipation has begun since the Revolution, let us do what we will, it will come around"; and in a similar convention in North Carolina, Mr. Iredell, who was afterward a justice of the United States Supreme Court, remarked, "When the entire abolition of slavery takes place, it will be an event which must be pleasing to every generous mind and every friend of human nature." Colonel Laurens, a noble patriot, and large slave-owner of South Carolina, informed his son that he was devising means to manumit his slaves, and requested his aid in the matter. Mr. Leigh of Vir-

ginia affirmed that, "During the Revolution, and for many years after, the abolition of slavery was a favorite topic with many of our ablest statesmen, who entertained with respect all the schemes which wisdom or ingenuity could suggest for accomplishing the object." These citations, which need not be further indulged in, undoubtedly show the existence of a widespread antislavery sentiment among the American people at an early date in our national history.

But a more significant confirmation of the prevalence of early antislavery sentiment is shown by the action of the Constitutional Convention in the promulgation of its ordinance for the government of the Northwest Territory, which contained these significant words, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, shall exist"; nor has slavery ever had the least foothold in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, or Michigan, the five states which were afterward carved out of this magnificent territory, whose free character was made possible by the unanimous vote of slaveholding states.

With this array of credible evidence before us, the conclusion is irresistible that the representative public sentiment of the country was largely antislavery in character. That a powerful reaction subsequently took place is no less obvious. It is, therefore, worth while inquiring into the causes which wrought so great a change in the popular mind. We have already referred to the invention of the cotton-gin, which, per-

haps more than any one event, was responsible for the extension and continuance of slavery, when viewed from an industrial standpoint. But it must also be borne in mind that the irreconcilable strife between freedom and slavery, though lulled by the Revolution, was renewed in the Constitutional Convention, and fanned into flame as the South, step by step, wrested from its adversary ignoble concessions, and that these conflicts strengthened and crystallized the convictions and purposes of each side. The proslavery sentiment was also abetted by the lack of education among the masses of the Southern whites, a large proportion of whom could neither read nor write. It was further fostered by the geographical isolation of the states, the lack of means for rapid transit, the rarity of personal and postal intercourse, the commercial greed of the North, the dearth of civil knowledge, the conflict in the public mind regarding the nature and functions of the Federal government, which grew out of a concurrent belief in the sovereign capacity of each state. The supreme agency, however, which assured permanence to slavery, was the overthrow of the Federal party in 1800, an event that gave the South for sixty years practical control of the national government.

The first measurement of strength between slavery and freedom took place in 1819, and grew out of the application of the citizens of the territory of Missouri for admission to statehood. A bitter and hostile feeling was at once developed, which ended in a drawn battle with the odds in favor of the South. Missouri



came into the Union as a slave state, though slavery, by the terms of the famous Compromise Act of the following year, was forever prohibited north of 36° 30', in all territory acquired from France by the Louisiana Purchase. The second attempt to check and curb the expansion of slavery was embodied in the Wilmot Proviso of 1846, and though it failed to become incorporated into law, it was, nevertheless, a courageous endeavor to consecrate American soil to freedom. Moreover, the fact that its author, David Wilmot, was a Democrat from Pennsylvania invests the measure with historic interest. That Texas and slavery were interchangeable terms was a foregone conclusion, when the matter of its admission was made the issue in 1845; but, notwithstanding the most strenuous opposition, slavery was again the victor. In 1850 a prolonged and bitter contest ensued over the petition of California for admission to the Union as a free state. A second compromise was effected, California was admitted; the slave trade was prohibited in the District of Columbia, but a Fugitive Slave Law of the most atrocious character was enacted to appease the South. In 1854 the Missouri Compromise Act was repealed, in order to introduce slavery into Kansas and Nebraska; and though the South scored a legislative triumph, both of these territories were subsequently admitted as free states.

The exclusion of slavery from Kansas became the turning-point in the contest between slavery and



freedom, and assured the free element in our population a future ascendancy in national affairs. Previously the South had maintained its power in the general government with unscrupulous persistence, for it permitted the admission of no free state that was not offset by the admission of a slave state, so that, up to 1850, when we had fifteen free and fifteen slave states, the numerical parity of the two sections was kept intact. But, after the admission of California, Oregon, and Minnesota as states of the Union, the South foresaw the eradication of slavery decreed. The illimitable Northwest, with its millions of acres of inviting soil, awaiting the advent of free labor, was undergoing rapid settlement with persons opposed to servile toil, hence with the circumscription of slave territory the freedom of the negroes became merely a question of time and methods.

The course of the South on the slave question vividly illustrates the power of coherence in conviction and purpose, when exerted by a determined minority. In 1860 that section had twelve million of inhabitants, of which one-third were slaves, owned by less than four hundred thousand persons; and we are treated to the unique spectacle of seeing less than half a million persons, in absolute control of eight million of free persons in their own section, arrogantly dominating twenty millions of white freemen in another part of a country whose laws declare all its members equal. Truly the world furnishes no parallel to it, and it appears impossible that, in this age,

rational men should so long have submitted to such a subversion of their liberties and denial of rights. And, inasmuch as the autonomy which the slave advocates had in mind, and which they sought to engraft on the noblest and truest conception of the rights of man that the blurred vision of humanity had hitherto realized, was a republican oligarchy based on class supremacy, there necessarily arose a conflict. The Southern slaveholding class had no adequate conception of the nature and functions of republican institutions. How could they, representing as they did a self-constituted oligarchy, with their notions of government drawn from Greek and Roman sources, and every local condition constantly suggesting analogous states between themselves and their classical slaveholding predecessors in these ancient republics?

The nomination of Abraham Lincoln by the Republican party for President of the United States created a direct issue between slavery and freedom, and on that issue the South, for the first time in the history of the government, was defeated. Secession had been the threat which, like the sword of Damocles, the South had long held over the North. In 1787 Georgia and South Carolina had refused to come into the Union unless slavery was recognized and the slave trade permitted. In 1820 the South as a unit threatened to dissolve the Union unless Missouri was admitted as a slave state. It took the same position, though with greater vehemence, when California came up for admission as a free state, and, in the judgment

of many sane men, the dissolution of the republic was only averted by the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. Southern arrogance rose to the height of frenzy in the Kansas matter, and the manifest determination of the slave party to dominate the nation or destroy it awakened the free spirit of the North, as nothing else had done before; still there was a general feeling that it would never proceed to the extreme length of actual separation. But, notwithstanding the incredulity of the North and the impassioned protests of the conservative South, one after another of the slave states seceded, to inaugurate a war that aimed at nothing less than the destruction of the Federal government. In the sober perspective of to-day it will hardly be questioned that slavery was the immediate incitement, as well as the underlying motive, which led to the Civil War. Nor is this conclusion unwarranted, for Alexander Stephens said at the organization of the Secession government, "Slavery is the cornerstone of the new Confederacy."

President Lincoln had a preëminent endowment of moral qualities. He was a leader of consummate parts, a statesman of prophetic wisdom, a magistrate of unwavering fidelity, a citizen of transcendent loyalty to the highest ideals of the nation. He was unalterably opposed to slavery, which he fitly characterized as having its origin and continuance in the selfishness of man. "My paramount object," said he, "is to save the Union, and not either to save or de-



stroy slavery; if I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it, and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that." Yet he was mindful to say, "If God wills that the war continue until all the wealth of the bondman's toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.'"

President Lincoln was the chosen head and front of the military and civil power of the nation. That he had authority in either capacity to issue a proclamation freeing the slaves of the Southern insurgents is beyond question, nor does the fact that negro emancipation was not the purpose, but a strategic incident, of the war detract from the value of the act to the enslaved race. The primary purpose of the United States, in employing all available means for the suppression of the Rebellion, was to maintain national integrity. But future union without universal freedom was impossible, for servile bondage in a free government had been made impossible. The executive act, then, which conferred physical freedom on the negro was not due in any measure to fanaticism, but to a sense of duty and exalted conceptions of national patriotism.

In the historical evolution of negro freedom five great epoch-making events precede its final consummation. These were the prohibition of the slave



trade in 1774 by the Continental Congress; the Declaration of Independence, in 1776; the Free State Ordinance of 1787; the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854; and the invasion of Virginia by John Brown in 1859. Each of these events had a marked influence on the institution of slavery. The earlier ones circumscribed its bounds, and fostered an anti-slavery spirit among the non-slaveholding classes. The latter thoroughly awakened the country to the dangers of a servile insurrection. The John Brown invasion, in its ultimate reaches, possessed tremendous significance. The weakness of the South was laid bare; all saw that its social fabric rested on a slumbering volcano; the nation was alarmed and gave voice to its fears by its votes.

The years between 1860 and 1865 marked the inception and culmination of the most practical and effectual antislavery agitation and legislation the country had witnessed. Beginning in July, 1861, the first act of a series of similar measures directed against slavery was passed by the Congress of the United States, freeing all slaves employed by the Confederate authorities in rebellious acts against the government and authority of the United States. The second, prohibiting officers of the Federal army from returning slaves to their masters, was enacted early in 1862. The third was the adoption by Congress of the joint resolution recommended by President Lincoln, tendering national pecuniary aid in furtherance of state emancipation. Mr. Lincoln

constantly urged upon the Union-adhering states gradual emancipation, and pleaded for national compensation ; but his wise and disinterested efforts were not destined to bear fruit. The fourth act was the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, April 16, 1862. This was a national act, pure and simple, and vindicated the antislavery contention of over half a century ; namely, that Congress had exclusive jurisdiction over slavery within the District. About three thousand slaves were included in and benefited by this act of emancipation. The average pay of the government to their owners was about \$300. To one of the payments a singular incident was attached. It appears that a free negro, who had some years before bought and paid for his slave wife, demanded payment for his wife and children. The claim was allowed on legal grounds, it being held that, as purchaser, he was the actual owner of his wife, and, as a slave woman, the children followed the condition of the mother. The fifth measure, passed in June, 1862, forever prohibited slavery in all the territories of the United States then held, or that might thereafter be acquired. The sixth made free all slaves of disloyal owners who found refuge within Union lines, and forbade their return to masters by army officers on pain of dismissal from the Federal service.

The seventh act was a law to prohibit the African slave trade. The eighth was the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law, in June, 1864. The ninth was the

prohibition of the interstate slave trade, which Randolph of Virginia, in the early part of the century, characterized as "worse and more odious than the foreign slave trade itself." The tenth and crowning antislavery act was the Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment, which forever prohibits slavery in the United States and territories. This consummate measure was suggested and its adoption urged by Mr. Lincoln himself, after he had failed to secure the coöperation of the border states in the matter of gradual emancipation. When, therefore, universal freedom was decreed by the Thirteenth Amendment, the obstinate Union slaveholders found themselves entirely shut out from receiving any compensation for their negro property. One notable exception, however, to the mandatory operations of this amendment should be mentioned. Maryland, by a popular vote, in October, 1864, freed her slaves.

In reviewing the causes which brought about the abolishment of slavery, we are painfully impressed with the indifferent attitude of negroes toward the agencies which consummated their freedom, an indifference which leads us to conclude that they have neither intelligent knowledge of the magnitude of the boon conferred on the race, nor sensible gratitude for one who performed the most heroic act for them. This apathy and ingratitude becomes all the more inexplicable when we recall that negroes of the United States continue to commemorate English slave emancipation, while the anniversary of our



own great epoch-making event, the liberation of four million chattel slaves, with its attendant strife, carnage, disrupted homes, and disabled survivors, is passed over in silence and forgetfulness by a people who ought to be the first and foremost in perpetuating its memories. Not only is there no racial recognition of the 22d of September, the date of the issuance of the emancipation proclamation, nor of the 1st of January, the time when it went into effect, but negroes neither celebrate within their own ranks, nor unite with their fellow-citizens, in commemorating the anniversary of the great emancipator's birthday.

Before the war the South had a free negro population in excess of a quarter of a million souls, most of whom were engaged in some form of industry; many of them had wealth. They occupied, however, an anomalous social and political relation to the white race, which cannot be more concisely depicted than by taking this lucid description from the pages of an eminent writer: "The free negro can neither share the rights, nor the pleasures, nor the labors, nor the afflictions of him whose equal he has been declared to be, and he cannot meet him upon fair terms of life, or in death; and these obvious inequalities established by laws are perpetuated by manners." But, notwithstanding their admitted oppression and servile state, the official records show that thousands of free negroes tendered their services as soldiers, and were duly enrolled and equipped by the Confederate authorities. Moreover, not a few of them owned slaves,



and gave both sympathy and money in support of the Southern cause. But free negro soldiers were no strangers to the South. General Jackson had employed them at New Orleans; they were also regularly enrolled as soldiers in the Revolutionary War, and, in the main, all of the colonies favored their employment, in one form or another, in military service. Virginia, it may be recalled, led off in offering freedom to all negro slaves who should enlist for colonial defence, though there is no proof that any considerable number availed themselves of the privilege. On the contrary, more than thirty thousand slaves fled to the English army, and a later generation repeated the experience during the Civil War, when vast multitudes deserted their homes to cast in their lot with the Union forces.

So far as the slaves themselves were concerned there was a belief, both here and abroad, that when a favorable opportunity came they would rise in rebellion against their masters. But, contrary to a century of prophecy, as well as current expectation, neither a general insurrection nor local outbreak of any kind occurred. The negroes, largely left to their own devices, quietly tilled the soil, raising cotton for exportation and food for their own and army uses. They built fortifications for Southern defence, and spun and wove the cloth for its soldiers' garments, and, in the most praiseworthy manner, took care of the wives and children of their absent enslavers. The slaves therefore were important and powerful

auxiliaries of the Southern Confederacy, and, in the light of later developments, we are led to believe that, had they been enrolled in the Confederate army early in the Rebellion, recognition of the Confederacy would have come from both England and France, in which event the final issue would have been problematical.

That the negroes did not revolt is one of the incomprehensible features of our Civil War. Every chance for success was theirs, nor were they ignorant of their opportunity for striking an effectual and crushing blow against their oppressors. Why was it not done? Several potent causes combined to render any widespread insurrection at that time impossible. There was, in the first place, a genuine affection for the white race, implanted in hundreds of thousands of negroes by amalgamation; there was, in no less degree, a race love created by the foster parental relations which negro women sustained toward white children; there was also a genuine desire on the part of the negro men to discharge worthily the duties with which they were intrusted by their absent masters. But the supreme and all-pervading influence which restrained them was rooted in their religious convictions; for the slave negro, unlike the modern freedman, was a being in whom religious fervor was intensely and overwhelmingly manifest.

In the last analysis, then, the key to negro passiveness is found in his religious notions, and the fact that he had unquestioning faith in his eventual

liberation through some extraordinary but always supernatural method of interference, explains many otherwise inexplicable phases of his character and attitude during slavery. Faith in negro freedom was the dying prophecy of white-haired patriarchs, the parting legacy of fathers and mothers to weeping children of whom they were bereft by a dehumanizing chattelism. At moments it awakened in the most abject of bondmen a dim sense of manhood, while the far-seeing were lifted toward the summits of the Mount of Transfiguration, and beheld themselves clothed in God-ordained rights and divinely imposed duties. Convictions of eventual manumission were so thoroughly inwrought into every fibre of the negro's being that triumphant freedom became the refrain of every aspiration and the burden of all invocation.

These sentiments were kept at white heat through plaintive songs and the impassioned speech of their own religious teachers, who, likening their thralldom to that of the Hebrews of old in bondage to the Egyptians, were wont to attribute their ultimate deliverance to a mandate recorded on high in response to tears and groans and midnight wrestlings in prayer, and which was to be executed on earth with fiery vengeance. Hence, when freedom came, the credulous mind of the negro saw the likeness between the Hebrews and himself verified. Were not Pharaoh and his army drowned in the Red Sea in a mad pursuit of the escaping Israelites? Did not every battle-field of whitened bones and unmarked



graves bear witness to the stubborn determination of the white masters not to let God's black children be free? Nor did the analogy cease here, for, as the dead first-born in every Egyptian household testified to the ampleness of God's anger toward the merciless oppressors of his people, so every Southern household was wrapped in sadness, and every hearthstone shadowed by grief, because some loved one was stricken down by a soldier of freedom.

To the religious slave negro, scriptural statements were literal facts, and with his mind filled with its memorized texts he believed himself to walk and talk with God. When, therefore, Lincoln's proclamation of liberty was first read in the slave cabins of the South, their inmates were filled with inexpressible rapture. An unutterable joy swept into the hearts of every decrepit father, aged mother, toilworn brother, and burden-laden sister, who had watched and waited through long weary years for the fruitage of a faith which had sent heavenward unnumbered prayers to Him who watches even the sparrow's fall. But when the last word of Liberty's message was read, and they realized that its tremendous mandate made them free, and ushered in the dawn of a new era, it could not be expected that they would be fully conscious of its vital significance. Before them, spread out in freshness and beauty, lay the Promised Land of Liberty, with its illimitable possibilities of manly growth and womanly development, with its unexplored opportunities for



mind-training and soul-culture, — for fraternal consort with American ideas, for investiture with American citizenship, for industrial achievement at the forge and factory, for racial reciprocity and friendly strivings for national unity, — with only the Jordan of preparation, sobriety, steadiness, and purpose lying between. But no Joshua was with them to part the waters, and so, turning back from visions of grandeur and high-wrought hopes, they were speedily enwrapped in the darkness of industrial servitude.

The emancipation of the negroes brought about a social and economic revolution in the methods and habits of Southern life, and introduced grave and disturbing issues that have not yet ceased to exist. The truth is that neither the white nor black people were prepared for the abolition of slavery. The former, humiliated by their defeats in war and exasperated by the loss of property at home, were in no mood to submit to an arbitrary deprivation of that industrial force on which they had depended for centuries; nor were the latter, in any essential respect, qualified to pass from a state of bondage to one of freedom. Such a transition, fraught with untried responsibilities and unknown duties, carried them beyond their depth. To be sure, the negroes had a dim consciousness that they were free, — but free to do what? To eat, to drink, to sleep, and roam at will, so much was conceivable and eagerly sought to be realized; but that as free men and women they

owed duties to each other and society in general, they had no clear conception.

Set adrift as the freedmen were, without capable self-direction, among a superior governing class embittered by a conscious impotence to arrest the movement of an aimless people standing out in the broad sunlight of physical liberty, they were aware only of an escape from a hitherto interminable system of unpaid toil. It was obviously impossible that an event so abrupt should not produce serious disarrangement of the previous social order. To their credit be it said, however, that but few of the negro men and women who were living together as husband and wife, under the régime of slavery, abandoned each other when emancipation gave them the opportunity to sever such relations. On the contrary, intoxicating as the joys of freedom may have been to them, its new birth of feeling and experience gave them not only a sense of personal ownership of body and limb, of muscle and movement, but reasonable notions as well of conjugal duty, parental rights, filial obligations, and fraternal relations which acquired greater coherency as the stability and endurance of these relations became more clearly manifest. The negro, however, in his early emergence into domestic freedom, was not without the helpful counsels of the better men and women of the slaveholding class, which did much to hold in check the turbulence of his unstable nature.

The negroes entered on their career of freedom

barren of all material possessions other than the tattered garments with which their bodies were partially covered, to begin under untried conditions a grim conflict with industrial servitude. Responsible ownership, with its provident oversight, had cared for them in the matter of clothing, food, shelter, and general supervision of labor and conduct. This now gave way to a whimsical and irresponsible method of living. It has always been to us a source of ceaseless regret that the liberated slaves were not committed to some method of probationary oversight, which would have provided for their industrial and mental training. Examples were not wanting; for that which European serfdom did for the slaves of Europe, and industrial apprenticeship for the emancipated negroes of the British West Indies, might have been successfully invoked in behalf of our own released bondmen with infinite profit to themselves and the nation. Negro labor under slavery was bred to subjection and dependent control. When directive oversight was withdrawn, and the negro left to his own volition, his productiveness and reliability as a worker, for obvious causes, deteriorated. He had no aspiration to create, no ambition to excel; to him labor was bondage; idleness, freedom.

The negro is legally free, but out of the changed relation between the two races a problem of perilous reality has grown, one which even at this late day is but little understood by the great body of the American people. We are satisfied that the ground-



work of this problem is not race aversion. The negro cherishes no resentment toward the whites, notwithstanding that race appears to be imbued with a deliberate and set purpose to forego none of its ancient customs; nor have the white people any inherent or ineradicable aversion to the negro. But, nevertheless, there are wrongs to be effaced and rights to be enthroned before enduring harmony can be established between them.

We believe this problem to be solvable despite the irrational attitude of each race toward existing misunderstandings, though until each side is ready to make substantial concessions an ever widening breach must continue to exist between two interdependent classes. We find, to put the facts in a sentence, that transmitted influences have implanted in the white race a masterful spirit, which imperiously disregards the rights of the freedmen to such an extent as to exclude from the start every consideration of their equal participation in the common benefits of life. On the other hand, we discover that the negro has no true sense of his relation to the other race, or of those obligations which such relations impose; nor does he appear to realize that neither race appreciation nor self-respect can be secured — except by acquiring ability for capable doing. Each side, therefore, contributes to the general issue its selfish and crude notions of social justice, and, because of it, social injustice dominates their lives and living.

## CHAPTER III

### INDUSTRIAL BONDAGE

AT the end of the Civil War no steps had been taken by the Federal government to define what relation the states lately in rebellion should thenceforth sustain to the national Union. Not only had no permanent civic status of the states been arranged, but the future condition and relation of the negro to his environment was wholly undecided. Local government in the South remained under the control of those who had waged stubborn warfare in support of slavery. It was under these circumstances a natural outcome of events that those who were in actual control of affairs, and who had previously sought by every available means to perpetuate negro enthrallment, should strive in other respects to keep the freedmen in as rigorous subjection as possible to their established customs. The consequence was that, for three years after the war, the negro occupied a nondescript relation to Southern society. He was neither slave nor freeman, though he partook of the nature of both. It was during this period that the most odious class legislation was enacted which has ever disgraced the pages of American jurispru-

dence, nor is it too much to say that the industrial bondage to which the freed people were subjected embraced all of the abominations of chattelism, without possessing, in the least degree, any of its humane features.

It is not necessary, to the end we have in view, to reproduce in full the "Black Code" of the period, which was essentially the same in text and character in all of the Southern states. A brief reference to its salient features will give sufficient insight into the nature and purpose of the many measures which hedged about the person of the disenthralled bondman. Under the established laws negroes were compelled, under heavy penalties, to hire themselves within a specified time to the white planters, at such wages as the latter had determined. They were forbidden to leave their place of employment without written permission from their employer; nor could they be absent after nightfall without liability to arrest and severe punishment. Moreover, should they quit their places of service, they could be arrested by any white man, and lodged in the nearest jail, to await identification and recovery. The cost of such proceedings was fixed upon the absconding negroes. Among other restrictions the freedmen were forbidden for any cause or provocation to offer resistance to their employers, either by word or act. It was made a felony for them to have a gun, pistol, or knife in their possession, nor were they permitted to keep any livestock, or to raise domestic produce



for individual use, or to barter in such things, or to have them in their possession. Corn, cotton, and flesh foods were especially named in the statutes, and when found in the hands of a freedman were deemed *prima facie* evidence of theft.

The law further decreed that all plantation negroes not in the employ of a white person were to be treated as vagrants, and, as such, were liable to arrest and sale to the highest bidder, for a term of service not exceeding six months. It was also directed that the unemployed negroes in cities should be put to work, without pay, by the city in which they were found, and kept in confinement at night, during a period of six months. Every male negro was required to pay a heavy poll tax, which constituted a lien on his wages; but when not paid by his employer, the delinquent negro debtor was compelled to work out the tax, with added cost, for the benefit of the state. Negroes were also prohibited from assembling, or holding meetings for any purpose, without first having obtained municipal license. These legal enactments fitly portray the temper and attitude of the South toward the freedmen in the years immediately after the war. That such legislation had not a shred of justification is obvious. Southern civilization was rightly discredited when it transformed its freed people into social outcasts, and stripped them of all ability to exert either physical or legal resistance to the most heinous injuries against their person or rights. Theoreti-

cally, the negro was liberated by law from physical slavery; but, as a matter of fact, he was simply transferred from responsible ownership and provident care to the negligent oversight of an irresponsible industrial servitude, and consigned to a condition from which there was neither appeal nor revolt.

The correctness of this conclusion is established by a brief recital of existing labor methods. The Southern economic unit, from the colonial period to the present, has been the plantation, which during slavery was also a social and civic centre. Labor on a plantation is divided into three classes. The first is the wage system, in which the planter stipulates to pay a certain sum to the laborer for a year's work. The second is payment in kind, — that is, the laborer agrees to accept a certain portion of the projected crop for services rendered. Crop sharing is the compensation of the third class: under this system the tiller undertakes to return a certain share of the crop grown for the use of the land in cultivation; and it is only under this latter method that thrifty and industrious negroes of the tenant class find opportunity for material progress. All of these several classes of labor are usually provided with subsistence by the planter. The adult negro, when employed, is allowed a monthly ration of one bushel of corn meal, fifteen pounds of pork, and two quarts of molasses; flour, sugar, and tea are extras, for which, if used, the employee is charged, and payment is taken out of his wages. Contracts for plan-

tation labor are usually made for a year ; wages are due at the end of the season. Accrued earnings are forfeited to the employer, through any voluntary quittance by the laborer. In the civil courts, the planter is the recognized accountant of both parties. His books of record are unimpeachable evidence, though abounding with fraudulent entries, and by his exhibit the negro is usually a debtor, and rarely a creditor, of the planter. We have knowledge of numerous instances where the written agreements drawn by the white planter's hand were the reverse of verbal contracts between himself and workmen ; but what of that, so long as the negro's sign manual is appended to the acknowledged instrument — an admission that stops controversy or litigation.

In Southern crop-raising cotton leads as a staple production. The cereals are incidents of plantation growth, hence needful domestic subsistence is neglected, notwithstanding idle and fertile fields lie ready to yield abundant support. This obvious food improvidence compels planters to have recourse to merchants for annual supplies. Subsistence for plantation use includes everything in the nature of domestic wants, — for example, food and clothing for the planter's family ; grain and hay for animals ; pork, meal, molasses, and tobacco for negroes ; with implements, seeds, and fertilizer for land. Payment for supplies is secured to merchants by mortgage of the ungrown crop and real estate of planter, and credited supplies command a monthly interest of



two or more per cent on indebtedness, with the result that the planter is always in bondage to the shopkeeper, and the negro laborer to the planter. At maturity the cotton is picked, baled, and consigned in liquidation to the commission merchant who advanced the planter supplies. Should it prove insufficient to discharge the claims of both merchant and laborer, the latter goes unpaid, no matter to what depth of poverty or length of suffering he, who has borne the heat and burden of the day, in the care and cultivation of the crop, is by that act reduced. Nor is there any remedy for the negro, since the commission merchant has priority of claims over all other creditors; besides, the new year opens with contracts that create fresh obligations and beget new securities.

This summary of current plantation methods shows that such a life is not one round of balmy sunshine and careless indifference for the industrial serf, who, born in penury and reared in ignorance, ceaselessly begins a year of toil in want, and ends it in debt. His shelter is never more than a barren hovel; his luxuries, coarse food and scanty clothing; his recreations, the weird music and emotional religion of the unlettered; his realities, ploddings of unvarying sameness under the sweltering sun of a Southern sky. He is paraded as a well-paid wage-earner; but one fails to understand how, by any known method of economy, eight dollars a month will support a family and make men well-to-do. This sombre picture of the freedmen, alternating between hope and despair,

awaiting the dawn of a better day, is not the fairest painting one might desire. But there is no other. The negro, so born and bred, toils and dies in helpless bondage to an environment as unyielding as the mountains of his own Southland. Moreover, under the present economic system of the South, there is no way out of this condition of affairs; for negro destitution gluts the labor market and dominates the manual activities of the freedmen as resistlessly as similar conditions overstock and control the pauperized centres of Europe. On the other hand, the employers of the negro say that he is an improvident spendthrift, and that all of his earnings go to the shopkeepers. Such statements are not without an amount of truth, but it should be understood that the credit system is the basis of Southern business economy, and the negro wage-earner is paid not always in cash, but largely by planters' orders on stores in which they may have a direct or indirect interest. There the sight of gaudy attire and flashy trinkets flame the desire and bedazzle the vision of the average freedman, who rarely exercises sound judgment in expenditure. At any rate, cajolery and chicanery, with remorseless insistence, wrest from the pockets of a weak and credulous people every dollar of their hard-won earnings, and leave them stripped of all means, — to enter anew on a round of interminable endeavor.

We have not unfairly depicted the condition of the wage-working plantation negroes; but when all

is said that can be said in behalf of a downtrodden class, it must be admitted that they have but dim notions of the value of time, of personal obligations and the sacredness of contracts. They are willing mendicants, where they ought to be manly producers, and, even when at work and receiving wages in cash, they are not thrifty and provident. Strongly averse to self-denial, they habitually indulge in extravagances in food, dress, and pleasures, from which other races who have abundant means to waste in folly refrain. But as thrifty industry was never a heritage of the Southern slave, the actual industrial power of the negro is more the promise of possibilities than substance of achievement. The negro, then, has yet to find his place and vocation in our social structure; and that will not be done until he has attained, through self-comprehension, an adequate knowledge of his powers and limitations; nor will the acquirement of mere dexterous activity avail him, for nothing less than first-hand knowledge gives men actual capacity, and the ability for well-doing.

From a purely economic standpoint no people understands the benefits and possibilities of free labor more clearly than do the former slaveholding class, and from no quarter would come stronger opposition to any proposal to reëstablish negro bondage on its former basis. The advantage to the slaveholding class accruing from free labor may be readily seen by observing that the interest on capital formerly invested in slave property, now pays the



wages of an equal number of freedmen. Nevertheless, the free industrial serf, who does more work than a slave, and whose labor nets a larger value to his employer, receives barely enough in wages to clothe himself and family in the vilest shoddy or coarsest of homespun, to say nothing of other needful domestic expenses, or those demands which sickness and death everywhere entail.

The obvious superiority of free hired labor over chattel bondage is very clearly demonstrated by a simple illustration. We will take, for example, the planter who undertakes to raise fifteen hundred bales of cotton by the labor of one hundred negro hands, and who has had an intelligent experience with both slave and free labor, and contrast the difference in outlay between the two systems. Now observe, in the first instance, that the planter is required to expend at least \$80,000 for the purchase of slaves before beginning his crop-raising; note further, that their clothing, food, and incidental expenses for a year, will add, say \$20,000 more, or, in all, \$100,000 for the first year's cost of slave labor; then compare these expenditures with the present cost of free labor. The annual wage hire of one hundred hands for a plantation will be about \$6000; less than \$4000 will provide for their food and other expenses connected therewith, so that, taken altogether, the total cost of hired labor for a year will not exceed \$10,000. The profits derived from the products of the two systems of labor will still more clearly show the disparity between free and slave

service. Supposing that, in each instance, cotton sells for ten cents a pound; fifteen hundred bales will bring \$60,000,—an annual net gain to the employer of free labor of \$50,000. But in using all slave labor, two years would be required to realize a sum equal to the initial purchase outlay; while the third year, though showing a profit of \$30,000, would be \$120,000 less than the net gains of free labor. But not only did the freeing of the slave liberate imprisoned capital, but that event now compels its toiling millions to reimburse the South every decade for its pecuniary losses in chattel property; and it has so transformed that section that wealth revels where poverty once reigned.

The industrial bondage of the freedman, is, however, the logical sequence of negro chattelism. It has no justification in law or reason, though it strongly reminds us of the several phases of servitude which ancient bondmen underwent before individual liberty was attained. For example, in ancient industrial slavery, serfdom constituted the first step toward the personal freedom of the laboring class; the serf, unlike a slave, being an inalienable adjunct of the soil, could only be parted from along with the land to which he and his family were attached. Feudalism marks the second great stride in industrial emancipation; while the third and fundamental step in industrial progress was the legal emancipation of the individual worker from personal ownership, and the substitution of the wage system for

unpaid toil. A comparison of the freedman's condition with that of historical industrial servitude suggests, in many respects, his relations to the Southern plantation. He is a wage-working serf when bound by debt to a particular planter; and a mortgaged crop makes him a feudal tenant. But, though the freedman is an industrial serf, the groundwork of his bondage is not racial prejudice, but mental and manual inefficiency; on the other hand, we are aware that, while his nominal drift is toward extravagance, follies, and aversion to substantial acquisition, his earning capacity is greater than the compensation received. Industrial oppression, however, draws no color line, for both white and black breadwinners are under its sway. In all ages, and under every form of civilization, it has existed, and will continue to exist so long as idleness and industry, poverty and affluence, ignorance and knowledge, dwell side by side, and mankind divides into a served and a serving class.

Many of the complex forces which environ modern society are of our own creating, and irremediable so long as the capable and incapable jostle each other, and receive indiscriminate recognition in the industrial world. That men who have the right to live, have a right to equal opportunity for acquiring the means of living, is a sane conclusion. But as all men are not equally endowed with capacity for labor, and have not the ability to render service equal in quality and productiveness, justice to both requires that



laborers should be compensated for specific results — that is, for the quality and character of the work they perform — rather than for the time consumed in a given operation. Our convictions are that the God-ordained function of every human being is self-support; that people who can work and ought to work by reason of having health, strength, and unprovided physical needs, but who will not work, ought never to be made objects of charity, but should be subjected to such disciplinary processes as would compel their self-support. The only classes of unemployed deserving the slightest sympathy or assistance are the physically disabled and that truly unfortunate group of humanity, able and willing to work but unable to secure employment. For the physically helpless the state should furnish shelter and subsistence. To the other sort preference should be given, when opportunity offers, by all who employ manual labor; and that done, deserving physical want would be reduced to a minimum.

We now take up those questions which bear directly on negro industrial development. It is conservatively computed that there are eight million freedmen in the United States; of that number nearly seven million reside in sixteen states of the Union. They constitute one-fourth of the manual labor class of the nation; in station and capacity they represent the crude, raw material of industrial muscular force. That negroes are not capable workers, and fail to acquire a high degree of proficiency and efficiency in

their undertakings, is due to many explicable and correctible causes. The chief and foremost of these is their profound ignorance of industrial possibilities and abhorrence of disciplinary methods. They chafe under the restraints imposed by the requirement of capable performance, and crave to exchange for its exactions what they are pleased to term liberty — but which in reality is license — to do as they please. Nor can they be made to comprehend that the workman is the uncrowned king of the industrial realm, and educated labor enthroned vitality; or that only freemen — free to do or forbear — work with genuine fidelity, and give to toil their highest endeavor. Inasmuch, then, as they have no true sense of work or abiding inclination for intelligent production, they have naturally sunk into industrial bondage. Not only has social inefficiency imperilled and thwarted race uplifting, but false and pernicious notions regarding the nature and functions of industrial endeavor have been sown broadcast in the minds of the negro people. The specious teachings of pulpits and schoolrooms have wrought havoc, in creating a well-defined aversion to manual industry among the negro young men and women, — to such an extent that the evils of idleness are ripening into bitter fruit, and are fast unsettling the foundations of orderly living.

It is notably true that the Southern educated negro shuns all work involving manual effort, and, in imitation of a superior environment, calls in to his aid, for domestic, garden, and field service, the sinewy arms

of unskilled muscular force. It is this belittling of the dignity of labor on the part of the more enlightened negroes that creates an aversion among the illiterate for honest toil, and a desire to escape physical exertion. It finds its highest exemplification in the studied avoidance of mechanical industries, involving intelligent physical endurance. For instance, we have knowledge of many negro mothers, themselves inured to toil and of honest intent, though of obvious weakness in judgment, who undertake at great self-denial to procure for their daughters a semblance of knowledge acquired from books, but who studiously exempt them from domestic labor. The consequence is that, being untrained to work, such girls grow up in idleness, and readily drift into dissolute company, to their own shame and their parents' humiliation.

It is obvious that individuals reared under such conditions are foredoomed to social destruction; for what capital in the way of acquirements have these young people, when called to enter upon a career of responsible living? To begin with, their mental training is rudimentary and defective, and, therefore, inadequate for professional requirements; while their hands, the only absolutely available raw material of real value they possess, have been wholly neglected. They are, therefore, neither qualified to enter the domestic service of others nor fitted to make a home for themselves. Inasmuch, then, as these conditions largely obtain among the freedmen, we insist that a knowledge of domestic industries should be imparted to the youth of



both sexes, who, when capably trained, should be required to perform a responsible daily task, not so much with a primary purpose of future wages, as to discipline them for usefulness in adult living. A forecast of sound wisdom indicates that the future is full of peril to the rising generation of negroes. That being the case, it becomes our duty to devise such ways and means as will not only avert impending disasters, but so mould and fashion our young people as to fit them for an honorable and successful discharge of the active duties of life.

That the negro has an aversion to manual labor and strives to evade it, is shown by the vast numbers of freedmen who throng to the cities and towns to avoid field work, although in cities only idleness and poverty await the great majority of them. For a similar reason multitudes of the freed people congregate in the villages, where the struggle for existence is a death-grapple. In both cases the actual drift of these movements is toward idle and dissolute living. Actuated by a like spirit of unrest, no inconsiderable proportion of negro men and women migrate North and West annually, and in increasing numbers each succeeding year. These people frequently come in the capacity of servants to families who had been sojourning in the South for the winter; others are assisted North by relatives and friends already residing there, either for the purpose of attending school or of engaging in domestic service. This latter class of persons, which consists mostly

of young women, is notably improved in manners and morals whenever they are fortunate enough to secure good homes and responsible supervision in cultured white families. But it is to be regretted that such freedwomen in large percentage soon evince a disposition to resist wholesome restraints, and through gregarious relations with a resident negro class, which imitates in a vainglorious way the dress and customs of fashionable white society, they imbibe a spirit of dissatisfaction with their station and means. The inevitable outcome is that such persons, having already an aversion to domestic labor, and finding their wages insufficient to satisfy their craving for personal adornment, readily succumb to the allurements of vicious living; consequently our Northern cities contain many negro women who lead impure lives, often under the garb of pretentious respectability.

Another class of freedmen who come North in all capacities and for all purposes are young men, a majority of whom are no doubt allured here by fairy tales of high wages and ready employment. Many of them do succeed in finding what, in comparison with their former earnings, would be fairly lucrative positions, and where, so long as discreet deportment and reasonable fidelity to the interests of their employers are observed, they are treated with considerate regard. It must not be forgotten that there exists in the minds of many Northern white men and women what may be termed a sentimental

sympathy for the freedmen. These sympathizers extend every aid toward the advancement of such members of the race as are brought into contact with them. It is to be regretted, however, that in many instances such favors are unworthily bestowed. Nevertheless there are other instances where the recipients have developed strong manly and womanly qualities, and become honored members of the community where they reside. This would be more often true of the negroes who live in the North, were they content to live in the country and suburban districts; but who appear to be never so happy as when huddled together in crowded tenements in the slum quarters of our large cities.

A significant thing to be observed in connection with the migrations of the freedmen is that, when once they leave the South, they rarely return thither, it matters not what may have been the main incitement of their leaving. All types and grades appear to be under the same spell, the learned and unlearned, the student class as well as domestic servants. None of them appear to be bound in any serious sense to the land of their birth. A desire to aid their less fortunate brethren rarely recalls them. On the contrary, after a brief stay in the North, negroes of every sort seem to acquire an aversion for their Southern connection, and whenever possible seek to hide the fact of their actual origin by conveying the impression that they were born elsewhere.

There was a time when it was the pride and boast



of black men that they occupied responsible and confidential positions in the homes of the best Northern families, the doors of which to-day are closed to all negro applicants. Not only are they often excluded from the more exacting phases of domestic service, but they are largely shut out from kindred offices, such as those of steward, coachman, and private waiter, — lines of service that a generation ago were filled entirely by them. Nor has the negro fared better in other industries; for even as a barber, the Frenchman, Italian, Portuguese, and German have effectually supplanted him, and, through the evolutions of social change, have lifted what was in his hands menial work to an almost artistic perfection. We have referred to the increasing exclusion of negroes from private service. Perhaps the greatest drawback in the way of their procuring domestic employment is the innate fondness of negro men for white women. Coming from a section where social delinquencies are winked at, the less restrictive intercourse of the races in the North raises the presumption in their minds that all social barriers are eliminated. Therefore, while the negro women are amenable to impure proposals from their social superiors, the negro men, crazed by their social freedom, become so emboldened by vicious contact as frequently to make improper advances toward the white female domestics of the houses where they are employed. The possibility of such occurrences furnishes the ground, it is fair to presume, for the

exclusion of negroes from vocations where they once enjoyed a monopoly, and which, in many respects, they are better fitted to fill than are the members of any other race.

But while it is impossible for the negro to escape the consequences of his foolhardy pretensions, yet much of the social and industrial disaster which has overtaken him since emancipation has not been altogether of his own creating, but rather the direct outcome of the sophistical exhortations of his early accredited teachers. Their insistence was that he should abandon the fields of industry, of which he had some knowledge, and betake himself to others of unknown and untried endeavor, and for which he had neither preparatory training nor visible aptitude. Hence, jeered at as scullions and derided as menials, the modern negroes have quit the callings in which their fathers had right worthily wrought, to become declaiming pettifoggers, pulpit ranters, quack doctors, and sham teachers. It is the nondescript representatives of these vocations who evince a proneness to speak in terms of depreciation, if not of positive contempt, of their ancestors and negroes of the present time employed in domestic capacities. But it is no undeserved tribute to say in this connection, that some of the best examples of good conduct and high character the race has ever known belonged to the class of humble domestic workers. Moreover, many of the former head waiters and stewards employed in hotel and steamboat service, in the selection of

subordinates and by the example they set in speech and demeanor, did more to create and maintain high ideals of negro manhood than the blatant pretensions of our modern negro ministry are ever likely to accomplish.

Universal experience has demonstrated that ignorant masses of mankind are not aroused or elevated by mere contact with intelligent forces; and that fact brings into prominence a racial characteristic which, in view of its industrial bearing, ought to be considered. For two centuries and a half the negro has dwelt in the presence of a superior and vigorous civilization, and one that at times has sought to inculcate in him lofty notions of duty, industry, and power, with the result that he has acquired a fair degree of diligence, and is reasonably industrious when under capable supervision. But what he has not yet acquired is that self-propelling force inherent in the white race; nor has he fairly utilized in freedom what he gained in compulsory bondage. For, notwithstanding its wanton abuse of power, slavery taught negroes trades, and made many of them skilled workmen in every department of mechanical handicraft. To these freedom gave an unlimited field for the exercise of their trained faculties. It was this class of artisans who became men of affairs, took contracts, made money, acquired credit, bought property, and became substantial citizens in our Southern commonwealths,—a fact which furnishes conclusive evidence that a knowledge of tools lifts



a man immeasurably above his fellows and crowns him with the emblems of industrial kingship.

But the slave-disciplined mechanic has no successor in the ranks of the freedmen, for the simple reason that they are lacking in mental energy and that subtle intelligence required of efficient artisans. The exclusion of the negro from the higher mechanical industries is due largely to his incapacity for acquiring a thorough painstaking knowledge of details. His sloven and slipshod methods are justly chargeable with his inability to achieve place and distinction in the mechanical field. Nor are we far amiss in saying that to these causes is due the fact that the race is not employed to any considerable extent in those large corporations managing the cotton and wool industries, the shoe factories, the iron mills, and machine shops of the country, North and South, though isolated examples of capable and trustworthy freedmen may be found in every department of skilled industry. There is a phase of this question, however, which has an important bearing on the future industrial development of the negro, and even now affects a saving remnant of the race; it is therefore entitled to candid treatment. We refer to the fact that there are black mechanics of known capacity and tried integrity who are not infrequently shut out from plying their vocation solely on account of racial prejudice, and in consequence thereof are compelled to resort to crude employments or starve.

Now it is evident that exclusion from opportunity

to earn a living, based on color or other physical incident equally irrelevant, is an invasion of the rights of labor, and one which contravenes the spirit and teachings of American institutions. A thorough preparation and competent performance should be insisted upon, but no less strenuously opportunity for achievement. When skilled negro labor is excluded from opportunities for work and material gain open to white men of no greater mechanical endowment, a grave wrong has been perpetrated, and one that merits universal condemnation at the hands of all right-thinking men. But the crux of the whole matter lies in the fact that the competent and incompetent, the trustworthy and untrustworthy negroes, are set apart from their white fellow-men by a distinctive color badge common to all. The caste disabilities, therefore, with which the deserving members of the race are burdened, become really formidable when we consider what color means to the educated, industrious, competent negro.

Black is deemed a symbol of ignorance and inefficiency. The unknown negro of capacity and integrity, essaying to enter competitive avenues of industry, encounters at the very threshold of his career an intense and deep-seated distrust of his ability, which, if it does not summarily thrust him aside without opportunity of vindication, subjects him to suspicious surveillance and unjust exactions, until incontestible demonstration of personal ability compels recognition and subsequent respect. This is the gantlet which

all skilled negro laborers have to run in seeking employment. It is, however, the wholesome examples of such workmen as gain a foothold in the industrial world, through sheer pluck and endurance, that are slowly eliminating race prejudice, and inclining the employers of labor more and more to take men for what they can do in the way of productive results. We note also a growing tendency on the part of the trade unions, which have always been formidable barriers to the employment of freedmen in competitive vocations, to take broader views of the industrial problem. This is evinced by their permitting negroes in many instances to become members of trade associations. We may therefore cherish the hope that at no distant day the capable representatives of labor of every type will fraternize in competitive rivalry, and that when the industrial worker seeks for opportunities to render service, there will be no lack of steady work and a due appreciation of both white and black laboring men.

The general unfitness of negro labor for other than the crudest endeavor has been thoroughly demonstrated in the United States and other parts of America where the negro dwells. But to substantiate our contention that he is industrially inefficient by inheritance, we quote a single well-attested example, furnished by South African experience. In 1898 there were employed in one industry, in that section, 73,000 laborers, of whom 9000 were white men and the remainder negroes. All were engaged in the same



kind of labor, yet, owing to their superior fitness, the white men earned, during the year, \$15,000,000 in wages, a sum as great as that which the 64,000 negroes received during the same period. That is to say, the white men earned per capita an average of \$1784, while their negro fellow-laborers received but \$230 per capita, thus showing a difference in the individual earning capacity of the two races of over \$1500. What are the conclusions to be drawn from this statement and comparison, other than that the best educated and disciplined men always have a tremendous advantage over the inferiorly equipped; and further, that those who have acquired only a common rudimentary training are not only distanced at the start by better-trained competitors, but are forever doomed to constitute the rear-guard of our great industrial army. What is true of all conditions of life is not to be waived aside by flippant speech or craven complaints. Moreover, so long as all human growth is due solely to individual energy and intelligent foresight, the negro ought fully to realize that untiring industry and self-denying thrift are potential forces in any struggle for material acquisition, and that, when these factors are associated with intelligent prudence, they inevitably become, in all competitive industrial activities, the foreordained winners.

No impartial observer of current phases of industrial economics fails to see that moral inadequacy is a characteristic defect of the unskilled class, or to realize that there is no place in the modern world for

the sloven, the indifferent, or the unskilled industrial toiler. The untrained man is always at the mercy of conditions, and in every undertaking invites defeat from the start. Nor can one who works fitfully compete with a steady plodder. Such being the case, the question of discipline and training becomes a paramount issue in dealing with manual inefficiency. But, while there ought to be uniformity in industrial educational methods, and equality in opportunity for employment as well as for learning, yet it is the greatest folly to assume that one industrial worker is as good as another, though both may have had the same advantages. Industrial success is dependent upon the perceptive power and sense of moral responsibility inherent in the individual worker. Furthermore, as skill is the sole key to success, it becomes more and more evident that the future belongs to the most strongly qualified and equipped races, and, within races themselves, to the best-trained men. Moreover all that is implied in industrial education is that the individual should make the wisest use of accessible means, and that a trained industrial worker is one who has the requisite ability to do a specific thing as it ought to be done.

But, notwithstanding the manual inefficiency of the freedmen appears to be clearly demonstrated, we have profound belief in eventual negro regeneration through forceful methods of discipline; nor ought there to exist any serious doubt that adequate training in constructive industries under capable instruc-

tion will bring to the race self-mastery and efficient development. The freedmen should be subjected therefore to thorough industrial drill in every department of manual activity. It will raise their efficiency and increase their compensation, but above all it is desirable because well-doing in itself brings out all of the highest and best qualities in man. Work in itself is the highest opportunity and greatest instrument of negro development. But the supreme need of the hour is a racial baptism in truth, integrity, frugality, continuity of purpose, intelligent action. Endowed with these qualities, negroes cease to be the inferiors of others, but are the equals of all, and capable of reasonable achievements.

We are ourselves of the conviction that any true uplifting of the negro in this country is to be found in a return to country life and in working the soil; nor will he, in our judgment, ever be rid of the shams and delusions that now environ him until he is back in simple touch with God and nature. If he desires to acquire steadiness, sobriety, intelligence, morality, physical harmony, and a clearer insight into duties and responsibilities than the submerged living and incessant strife of his present condition can possibly afford, he will find that rural work constitutes a basis for character-building incomparably beyond that of any other agency within his reach.



## CHAPTER IV

### MATERIAL THRIFT

CONTRARY to a general impression, property owners were not rare among the free negro residents of the United States, prior to the Civil War. We have no trustworthy data by which to measure the wealth of those residing in the North, though it is known to have been considerable; but in the South, where separate racial statistics were kept, the value of property owned by free negroes was between \$35,000,000 and \$40,000,000. In the early history of the country free negroes had equal chance with the whites to acquire an interest in the soil, for the public domain was open to them for settlement on the same terms as to others. That in many instances they availed themselves of such opportunities is established by the fact that in Virginia and the other colonies they were taxed as landowners. But while the South formerly had and still contains the largest number of negro property owners, the mass of the freedmen have not made the advance in material prosperity which we of right had expected of them. To be sure, there is no authorized statistical exhibit which sets forth the aggregate material

accumulations of the negro people; but, from the most trustworthy sources accessible, it may be inferred that at least fifteen per cent of them own property, and a conservative estimate puts the value of all real and personal property now held by that class throughout the United States at about \$700,000,000, on which it is said they pay state and municipal taxes in excess of \$3,000,000.

We shall get a more accurate view of the freedman's opportunity for material gain by an inspection of his annual wage-earnings, which may be fairly put at \$450,000,000, or about \$56 per capita. The range of his expenditures is said to be: for food, \$180,000,000; for clothes, \$90,000,000; for rum and vices, \$65,000,000; for rent, \$40,000,000; for housefurnishings, \$25,000,000; for fuel, \$21,000,000; for landed property, \$8,000,000; and deposits in banks, \$5,000,000. Should these sums approximate the actual facts, the obvious conclusion is that the negro is not only deficient in industrial perseverance, but in provident forethought. For example, were negroes creative producers of wealth to the extent of one dollar per month, their yearly savings would foot up \$100,000,000; or if from their earnings a saving per capita of twenty-five cents a month were made, the total annual cash deposits would reach \$25,000,000. That this is not done is evidence that the freedmen do not represent a saving people, though there are to be found among them many striking examples of self-denying thrift. We grant

that adverse causes have operated against the race in the past, but, nevertheless, we are moved to point out these serious existing conditions in the belief that substantial benefit may accrue to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

This exhibit is valuable to us chiefly for the sidelight which it throws on the financial status of the freedmen. For, granting they have accumulated property to the amount of \$700,000,000, a division of that sum among 8,000,000 people will give to each individual less than \$90 worth of property, or, in other words, it represents a saving of about \$2.60 a year since emancipation. Such facts are significant, and effectually dispose of that bubble which asserts that "The freedmen have made unparalleled material progress since the war." Another unwarranted assertion, frequently indulged in by overzealous friends of the blacks, is that they are the wealth-producers of the South. It may be that they are mechanical factors in the primary forces of wealth-production. But who does not realize that back of any kind of mechanism stands the guiding force of mind, and as negroes are obviously deficient in administrative qualities, we deny that they are now, or ever have been, directing forces in any department of industrial activity. In fact, as matters stand, any cessation of their crude labors for others renders their starvation imminent.

Broadly speaking, the three primary sources of material gain are agriculture, manufacture, and



trade. But as neither manufacturing nor commerce were distinctive features of Southern economy before the war, the people of that section were agriculturists, whose chief employment was raising cotton, the whitened fields of which were tilled by slave labor. In the other departments of industry the machinery, which exacted only the crudest knowledge of mechanics, was also in the hands of the bondmen, or the more shiftless poor whites. Dormant energies and inventive faculties were never stimulated into intelligent activity. Neither natural resources nor local incentive were wanting, for mineral wealth of fabulous value cropped out of every hillside and lay at its feet untouched, and from every mountain spur went forth a magnificent water-power rivalling those of many Northern mill-sites. Nevertheless, manufacturing languished. The swift-flowing stream was a stranger to the hum of the spindle or the vibration of the loom. The silence of the pine-covered hillside was undisturbed by the delving shovel, or plodding pick. Cotton was king, and negro slave labor its abject subject. Moreover, despite its pretensions to wealth, the South, as we now see, was in reality poor.

The advent of freedom wrought in the South changes so great that within a single score of years it has built more railroads, constructed more cotton mills, erected more iron furnaces, located more factories, opened more coal mines, discovered a larger mineral area, raises annually more cotton, and is in

possession of more available wealth than during the whole period of negro chattelism. Through these mighty forces of a silent and irresistible revolution every dashing river is alive with throbbing machinery and thriving activity; and mountains and hills are dotted with excavations for carboniferous deposits, and covered with tramways for transporting metallic ore. But what is of greater significance is that there may sometimes be seen in the wake of such transformative progress those who were the slave autocrats of yesterday and their former chattels, each busily engaged in acquiring the means for subsistence and wealth, and not infrequently rivals in competitive strife. Current statistics show that in the matter of cotton manufacture alone the South possesses over 500,000 spindles, and that its more than 500 mills represent one-fourth of the textile industry of the country, and have an aggregate value exceeding \$100,000,000. Fifty millions are invested in the cotton-seed oil industry, whose annual output exceeds \$100,000,000. The value of the cotton crop in a raw state will not fall far short of \$300,000,000.

So varied and complex are the economic conditions which surround the growth and manufacture of cotton, that it is not improbable that the entire cotton textile industry of the United States will at no distant day be transferred to the South, where the climate, water power, and other local advantages are strong competitive features of Northern mills. We need not be surprised, therefore, to see rivals of Low-

ell, Lawrence, and Fall River planted in North Georgia, East Tennessee, and western North Carolina by Northern capital, and manned by American labor. Such a consummation does not imply the destruction of the textile mills of the North, for no doubt in that event they would be remodelled and devoted to the woollen manufacture, and so find profitable employment in a growing industry. The Merrimac may yet become the American Tweed, and surpass its transatlantic competitor in the quality and finish of its woollen goods. Meanwhile this is assured: the South in process of construction is a substantial gain to humanity over the one it has displaced, and it gives abundant promise of a prosperous and enduring future. All that is wanting to make the transformation complete is that the whole section forego idleness, take on thrift, open its green forests and barren fields to small husbandmen, and substitute, in law and politics, fraternal liberty and universal equality for class legislation and race domination. When that is done it may be safely predicted that no part of the Union will grow richer in honest wealth or stronger in intelligent development.

Though the South is primarily an agricultural section, its economic methods are neither conducive to material thrift nor industrial elevation. Its dependent classes, white and black, are landless serfs, and feel bitterly the full force and effect of that significant aphorism which affirms that an ownership of land carries with it an ownership of men who live on



it. The result is that a condition of hopeless poverty, unknown elsewhere outside portions of continental Europe, exists in the Southern rural settlements. Thomas Jefferson uttered a profound economic truth when he said that the earth belonged in usufruct to the living, and to them only to derive subsistence and maintenance therefrom. With that sentiment all shades of leading economists agree; but back of all human selfishness and greed is recorded the original and universal title-deed to mankind, which commands men to "multiply and subdue the earth." Its fields, forests, ocean, and air are the ordained storehouses of subsistence for industrious humanity, whose "right to live carried with it the right to earn the necessities for living." Humanity has everywhere the right to demand, not only the opportunity to labor, but to receive a just share of the fruits of its industry, and in no more equitable way can this be done than by giving every human toiler an interest in the soil.

The primary and essential factors in any successful movement undertaken for the uplifting of illiterate and indigent classes are land and education. This involves two elements: the establishment of sound economic conditions, and the creation of a class of intelligent and efficient producers. It is an incontrovertible fact that great wealth and great poverty always exist where wages are low. It is equally apparent that a poverty-ridden class engaged in great industrial activities is an economic fallacy,

because good wages enhance local values, and add to already acquired wealth. Now, the working force of plantation life is the freedman; obviously, then, to broaden his knowledge and increase his pay adds to the general prosperity. This is notably exemplified in that hunger for home-ownership, which is so characteristic of the negro of brain and brawn, and who has somehow by dint of skill and rare frugality, become a small landowner and prosperous proprietor. We also see evidence of a similar spirit in a class of thrifty negro mechanics and plodding all-sorts, who, on the outskirts of some sleepy village or drowsing town or piney cross-roads, own a few acres of land and live contentedly in humble cottages. The man who owns the soil he tills, and is conscious that he alone is the rightful and exclusive possessor thereof, has a sense of manly independence which landless classes lack; and these sentiments are not only the life-springs that build up fresh, healthy, noble characters in individuals, but constitute, as well, the bulwarks of solid national development.

Landownership is unquestionably a substantial factor in race improvement. We maintain that it ought to take precedence over all other agencies for negro uplifting, for the reason that a landowner, great or small, is a fixture in the community, and thereby acquires a vested right in its welfare and development. Nor is it the nominal ownership of an extensive area of land, but a small homestead, with the inclination and ability to cultivate it, that the poor man needs.

But as the Southern plantation usually represents an extensive area of land, with rarely a disposition on the part of the owner to sell a small parcel, and as but few of the freedmen have either the means or the credit to purchase a large plantation outright, the result is that the great majority of them are landless dependants. Confronted, therefore, by inexorable economic conditions, it would be well could the negro race, as well as other landless inhabitants of the South, be stimulated into an effort of relentless activity against land monopoly and labor bondage through some feasible method of coöperative land purchase. But evidently, where there is a desire on the part of such persons to acquire a landed interest, the first step toward that end necessarily lies in intelligent association, and a combination of the means of the laboring classes within either race. To aid such movements, we present the following practical suggestion.

We have made a computation based on 100 families, organized as a land purchasing association. Let it be supposed that an organization is effected in September, with the fee for membership fixed at \$10, and with stated assessments at \$4 a month. In the month of February following its organization the association will have, in cash, \$3000. With this sum thirty mules are bought, and 1000 acres of land rented, for the use of which one-third of the cotton raised is to be given in payment of rent. Thirty families of the society are designated to till the soil.



An average crop will yield 300 bales of cotton; besides, considerable food subsistence should be produced on spare ground. At the close of the season, a division of the crop is made on this basis: 100 bales of cotton go for rent; 100 bales to the thirty families, for the labor of production; and 100 bales to the association, which if sold at six cents a pound will net \$2400. The financial exhibit at the beginning of the second year, in February, should show cash, per assessments, \$4800; from sale of cotton, \$2400; making in all, \$7200; which should be invested in mules and farming implements, in order that the whole association may engage in cotton-growing the second year. Hence, for that end, 4000 acres are leased; the assessments are reduced to \$2 a month as a guarantee fund for incidental expenses. We will suppose, as the result of the second year's experience, that the total production of cotton is 1500 bales, which are distributed as follows: 500 bales go to the landowner for rent; 500 for service of production, and 500 bales to the association fund. The latter, if sold at six cents a pound, will net a return of \$12,000; the assessments will aggregate \$2400; and both combined will give the association at the beginning of the third year a cash fund of \$14,400.

We will now assume that 4000 acres of land are bought, let us say at a cost of \$40,000, with one-third of the purchase money paid in hand. The remaining indebtedness is secured by a mortgage on the land, which should be discharged by annual pay-

ments extending over one, two, and three years. The monthly assessments should then be reduced to one dollar a month, though each family continues its annual contribution of five bales of cotton to the common treasury, besides being required to raise a sufficient food supply for its own consumption during the following year. Granting that a coöperative movement for land purchase such as we have described has been fairly inaugurated, we pass over the intervening period, and note the results of three years' experience. Fifteen hundred bales of cotton, the property of the association, should return in clear profit, \$36,000, a sum that will lift the land encumbrance, pay the interest on deferred payments, and meet current taxes, besides providing a substantial sum for distribution among the coöperating families for the improvement of their local homes. It is, of course, understood that the final liquidation of land indebtedness would be followed by a partition of the property, and the issuance of a deed in fee simple for forty acres of land to each participating head of family.

This brief survey of Southern material possibilities shows that within five years the indigent laborer may through intelligent coöperation acquire a proprietary right to the soil, and become a substantial citizen. Nor do we speak unadvisedly in saying that opportunity for substantial race improvement lies in the adoption of a proposition entirely practicable under honest and intelligent leadership. Every intelligent person who is in any degree familiar with

the facts of Southern life and resources can testify that extraordinary returns for comparatively small investments are not only possible, but substantially assured by this simple coöperation method. Moreover, the experience of building associations and coöperative banks furnishes conspicuous examples of what mutual self-help may accomplish, and the successful material amelioration of the laboring classes in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts through such agencies sufficiently attests the remunerative merits of such coworking.

To be sure, the negro is not an adept in aggressive, worldly shrewdness, nor the representative of a great money-making race. Perhaps his ethical conceptions prompt him to forego much that is immediate and practical in human affairs. Be that as it may, he ought, nevertheless, to be true to his best instincts, and faithful to those known duties which relate to himself and family. Whatever lifts him above his present dependent level should be eagerly embraced and judiciously undertaken, and as landownership will do for him what no other agency can accomplish, every true man in the race should bestir himself, and set on foot at once some method of land purchase that will provide homes for himself and his people. Nor can the colored preachers of the South render more efficient service to their race than by actively and honestly leading them in this matter of material progress, for in no other way can they so wisely contribute to the development and main-



tenance of a high standard of Christianity among the freed people.

While we insist that negroes, in common with other indigent classes, shall use all legitimate means to improve their physical condition, we are not unmindful of what many well-informed persons hold to be true, that the general government is under moral obligations to devise such measures of relief for the freed people as will ameliorate their condition. Specious pleading and sophistical ingenuity may interpose objections, but this statement of facts remains unanswered. The negroes were held as slaves under national and constitutional law, they were emancipated by the same authority, and in each instance national jurisprudence was held to be supreme. If slavery was right, emancipation was wrong, while if the reverse is true, negroes were illegally and arbitrarily held to a service for which they received neither adequate recompense nor reward. There is no denial here that individuals were the nominal owners of negro slaves, but it is indisputable that the general government was a prime factor in maintaining them in bondage. But, waiving aside all questions of government liability, prior to national emancipation, we may reasonably conclude that some compensation is due to the negroes for services rendered after January 1, 1863, to the close of the war, and the adjustment of those changed relations imposed by freedom.

There is scarcely need to cite precedents and quote

authorities in support of this conclusion, since numerous well-authenticated decisions under the common law fully cover the ground here taken. A reference in point is that of indentured minors, who, on attaining their majority, have been unlawfully restrained of their liberty and continued in compulsory service. In such cases adequate compensation and, not infrequently, exemplary damages have been awarded by the courts. Assuming our statement of facts to be correct, and construction of law judicially sound, we discover, in estimating the number of working slaves at 1,200,000 persons, that, by allowing them pay for labor performed from January 1, 1863, to July 1, 1865, at the rate of \$60 per year, there would be due them, for the thirty months' service, \$180,000,000. Granting, therefore, that recompense ought to be made to the freedmen, there is no measure of compensation that could be devised which would secure such beneficent results to them as the ownership of land; and a legislative enactment which provided for its acquisition by these people would be truly of the dignity of statesmanship.

We now advance the suggestion that the general government set apart a quantity of land in each Southern state for the exclusive benefit of the freed people, on the same principle that it has heretofore granted land subsidies to railroads and corporations, to promote the public welfare. That open to homestead entry should be used for this purpose. According to the report of the Land Commissioner, there are in

Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas, more than 100,000,000 acres of public land. In each of the other South Atlantic and Gulf states, the Federal government should acquire by purchase 2000 square miles of territory, an area that represents 1,280,000 acres of land, and by subdivision and allotment of forty acres to a homestead, give to each Southern state 30,000 small landed proprietors. The purchase cost of the land and the erection of necessary dwelling-houses should not exceed \$10,000,000. The buying of mules, farm implements, seeds, fertilizers, and the first year's subsistence would require an additional six millions of money, making the government outlay, for 30,000 well-equipped farms, \$16,000,000, or requiring a grand total expenditure of \$128,000,000 in the designated states for the acquirement of homesteads for a negro population of 1,200,000 persons.

It will be observed that this estimate excludes possible entries of the public domain. Should such be available, it will reduce this sum by at least thirty millions, otherwise the foregoing estimates, based on a maximum local valuation, will cover all necessary expenses for the first cost. The proposed appropriation for mules, farm implements, and subsistence will show a decided falling off in any practical application of this suggestion, since it will be found that many of the negro planters are already supplied. The savings made therefore, in this and other directions, from the total appropriation should be expended



in the erection of schoolhouses for normal and industrial education, which should be put on a basis of self-support by utilizing the remaining 80,000 acres of land in each state, in the manner now indicated. This land should be disposed of in forty-acre lots, under lease, contingent on the probity and industry of the tenant, and annual rental of three bales of cotton, and should yield a yearly school fund of 6000 bales, and have, in all probability, an average market value of \$150,000.

Our conviction is that the acquirement of land and education, under competent supervision, will work a transformation in the negro race. Hence, at the inception of a movement of this sort, suitable school buildings, not exceeding in cost \$1500 each, should be erected, say one for each 100 families. This would give 300 schoolhouses to each state, and the total expenditure in this direction ought not to exceed \$4,000,000. These schools, under the management of competent instructors, should be kept open eight months in the year; and just here it may be remarked that, in the event of such a movement as this land scheme contemplates being undertaken, it would be for the best interest of all concerned that distributed settlements of negro tenants, in communities of 100 families each, should be made. It would be unwise, and would defeat the end in view, to segregate the race in one locality. Moreover, distribution of these settlements would not only healthfully stimulate their own

industrial forces, but would exert a powerful influence of the most salutary nature on outside industrial agencies, and in the end bring the whole South into harmonious accord with the idea here broached.

But to continue the discussion of the main proposition. Each of these 30,000 farms should be leased for a period of three years, to thrifty and well-approved tenants, for an annual rental of three bales of cotton, with the privilege of purchase at the expiration of lease. A probation of three years will significantly test the fitness and integrity of the tenants, and assure deserving purchasers of land. Other safeguards that will readily suggest themselves should be thrown around both the government and tenant interest, not to hamper either, but to insure on the part of each an exact fulfilment of all the conditions stipulated in the contract. The total rent for three years will reach the sum of 2,160,000 bales of cotton, which, at a reasonable estimate, will have a cash value of at least \$60,000,000, — a sum of money that represents nearly one-half of the original investment. But with the termination of the tenant period these farms should be sold on a credit of five years, and paid for in five deferred annual payments, to be made in cotton, at the rate of three bales each year, the government to retain an equitable title until all liabilities are discharged by the purchaser, when its patent should issue to him. In this matter of land purchase we contemplate that its entire supervision

should be under the direction and control of the national Interior Department.

A conservative estimate of the monetary return that will accrue to the government by carrying out this proposition, shows that 240,000 farms with an annual rent roll of three bales of cotton from each farm will aggregate 720,000 bales a year, or a total of 3,600,000 bales for five years, which, if sold at \$25 per bale, will yield in cash \$90,000,000. When, therefore, we add to this sum the \$60,000,000 previously received as rent, it will be seen that the government has in eight years had returned to it \$150,000,000 on its original investment, or an excess over all expenditure of more than \$20,000,000, to say nothing of the hundreds of millions of dollars of wealth which it has been the means of creating for a previously indigent class. The expense attending these transactions would be nominal, for no doubt the large class of school-teachers, which we shall presume to be in the employ of the government, would be retained as subordinate agents, while the present corps of special agents of the Treasury would likely have general supervision of all financial matters. In any event, we are confident that the necessary annual expenditure would not exceed a quarter of a million dollars,—a sum which the rents from the school lands, to which reference has already been made, would amply provide. All payments to the government, whether as rent or purchase money, should either be covered into the national Treasury, or else employed



in the purchase of additional land for distribution and occupation, on terms similar to those we have described. In the latter case, the revenues accruing from such landed indebtedness could very properly constitute a sinking fund, for the payment of such portion of the national debt as may have matured during that period.

This discussion of government duty in the matter of affording material relief to the freedmen, while by no means exhaustive, as indeed it was not meant to be, is, nevertheless, pertinently suggestive of latent resources, of infinite possibilities, and of immeasurable gains in morals, intelligence, wealth, and homogeneous civilization, to both of our Southern classes, and consequently to the nation at large. No gratuities in land, food, shelter, or clothing are sought for the freedmen; all we ask is that full opportunity be given them to become useful, law-abiding citizens of the community in which they live; and in no better way can that result be reached than by aiding them to become self-respecting and self-sustaining custodians of rural homes. Nor is apology deemed necessary for a proposition whose utility is so obvious, and whose humanitarian qualities are so conspicuous, nor ought pleadings to be invoked for a measure that seeks to award a degree of reparation for past and present wrongs, committed by a powerful nation against a helpless people. This possible achievement for the freedmen of this country has its practical prototype among the serfs of Russia, whose freedom came only

two years earlier than that of our slaves. In emancipating her serfs Russia advanced loans to them upon their standing crops, and up to date has invested nearly \$500,000,000 in land purchase for their settlement which they are to repay in stated instalments. The consequence is that her freedmen are noted for industry and frugality in the management of their homes, and have strikingly distinguished themselves for good government and the advancement of popular education.

Previous to the Civil War the United States Treasury had a surplus of funds which was distributed among the several states. The wisdom of that measure has always been in doubt, but our national legislature is never lacking in distinguished members who are ready to advocate a lavish expenditure of public money for schemes of doubtful value. Let us, therefore, indulge the hope that at no distant day our Congress may rise to the dignity of sound political wisdom, and, through a judicious use of means already at command, solve a problem of almost inextricable comprehension. We have already called the attention of the country to this subject in numerous publications; and during the sessions of the Fifty-first Congress the late General Cogswell of Massachusetts had the kindness to introduce a bill for us whose main features, provided for ten normal and industrial schools for the freedmen, and, similar to lines laid down here, for the purchase of 6400 acres of land in each of the ten states designated, and the

erection of an industrial institute, and settlement of 100 selected negro families on each of these tracts of land. It is needless to say the bill never became a law. And yet, if such an enterprise were created by the government, or through private means, its influence and effect on Southern economics would be incalculable, both as a practical object-lesson in thrift to the white planters and as a source of inspiration to our benighted freedmen.

The chief aim of our preceding observations has been to exhibit the wide difference, as modes of land culture, which exists between the present labor methods of plantation service and those of an intelligently managed lease system, though in so doing we have not sought to introduce new and untried innovations, but rather to readjust existing agricultural methods. A better comprehension of this subject may, however, be gained by stating that the cultivated cotton area of the United States exceeds 20,000,000 acres, and has an average production of about 175 pounds to the acre; that fully 3,000,000 persons are engaged in its production, with an output per capita of less than three bales; and that the planter's net profit, under the present system of cotton-growing, will not, under the most favorable circumstances, exceed five per cent of his gross production.

We now deal with the question of material thrift in a way that is believed to cover the whole problem of negro industrial elevation; and the two propositions which are presented below, while involving a



radical change in Southern industrial methods, are obviously fraught with advantages to both the white and black people of the South. Our first proposition, which deals with land cultivation by tenants under lease, aims to effect a division of large tracts of tillage land into small allotments, with each tract cultivated by a responsible laborer under specified conditions. For illustration, we will take a planter engaged in cotton culture, owning 1200 acres of land, worth, we will say, \$10 an acre, or \$12,000 for the whole tract. We will assume that 300 acres are devoted to that staple, with an annual crop of 100 bales, and calculating the cost of production by ordinary methods, we shall get the following result: The wages of twenty negroes at \$8 a month for eight months' labor in ploughing and cultivation will be \$1280. The cost of their food, estimated at \$3.50 a month each, will require an outlay of \$560 more, and the feed of mules and incidental expenses will add \$200. To pick the cotton will cost about \$300, hence the aggregate of these sums will bring up the total expense of the year to \$2300 as the amount required to produce 100 bales of cotton, which, if sold at \$30 a bale, will bring \$3000. After deducting the expenses of production, the planter will have a credit balance of about \$700, though such a fair margin is not always realized in ordinary experience.

On the other hand, suppose this planter subdivides his plantation into thirty farms of forty acres each, and secures thirty capable and trustworthy tenants.

To each of them he leases a farm for an annual rental of four bales of cotton, the agreement binding the lessee to plant and cultivate each year during occupancy fifteen acres in cotton, ten acres in corn, and ten acres in pease, potatoes, and other food products. Such a distribution of farm produce should always be insisted upon, not only to guarantee the rent, but to secure the diversity in crop-raising meant to provide the tenant with food supplies for the coming year. At present, one of the most serious drawbacks to Southern industrial prosperity lies in pledging the ungrown crop for current food supplies. This method is not likely to be set aside without the exercise of wise forethought and intelligent self-denial. For some reason the people of that section, white and black, have never acquired the habit which is the key of all agricultural success, of raising and laying by a surplus of breadstuff for future use. In any practical test an industrial movement of this kind will give these results. The rent of thirty farms, at four bales of cotton each, will aggregate 120 bales, which at \$25 a bale will net \$3000, — a sum that represents clear gain to the planter without the least outlay of money or labor on his part, and returning a profit of over twenty per cent on capital invested in land. Should the same conditions obtain for five years, the landowner will then have received in rents \$15,000, or more than one hundred per cent on the original investment.

What are the gains under this system to the tenant,

would be a pertinent query. After deducting cost of production, and excluding reserved foods, a fair estimate will give at least \$100 in cash to the lessee, — a sum that puts him on the road to prospective wealth, and away beyond any comparison with previous earnings. But aside from any gain in material growth, this process of labor distribution and supervision teaches the most important lesson of plantation life, — that is, the faculty of raising and storing subsistence for future use. Observe, moreover, that when a laborer leases land and pays a fixed rental for its use, he is in every respect lifted above the level of a wage-worker, and by that act alone has taken a long stride toward industrial independence. Productive capacity and personal compensation is measured by what individual effort decrees or health permits. A negro tenant, therefore, with ordinary thrift and foresight, should, at the end of five years, have a comfortable house, good farming implements, mules and horses, cows and hogs, and at least \$500 in cash. He should also have acquired habits of industry and prudence, and be fitted by experience and practical knowledge to become a capable, self-directing owner of the soil; for to that end all such industrial movements should be directed.

Before passing to the next phase of this industrial question, we desire to call attention to certain salutary advantages involved in these suggested changes in plantation methods. It will be seen that this plan contemplates the assignment of a single family to a



specified parcel of land for residence and cultivation. A judicious isolation of negro families is a necessary step in the social elevation of the race. Such separation, moreover, will promote industry by developing commendable rivalry among tenants in land production. It will also create individual responsibility in oversight and execution, and is admirably adapted to serve every phase of plantation service. Nor is there the slightest doubt that by abandoning existing industrial methods the quality and character of negro labor will in a short time be perceptibly elevated, which would result in substantial increase in agricultural products at a lower cost to the planter and higher remuneration to the laborer. Finally, an arrangement of this sort opens the way to the core of our proposition, which seeks to enable thrifty negroes to become lessees of land.

We now take up the second proposition, and carry the illustration to its conclusion, by supposing that at the close of a five years' satisfactory experience in renting land to tenants, this thrifty owner, for a consideration of twenty-five bales of cotton, or its equivalent, to be paid in annual instalments of five bales each, sells to his negro tenants a farm of forty acres, giving a deed, and taking a mortgage on the land as security for deferred payments. We will further presume that the conditions of sale are carried out in good faith, with every obligation promptly met, and, in that case, it requires no seer to foretell the result. On the one hand, there is a negro farmer

with debt paid and mortgage cancelled, the owner of a free home. On the other there is a white owner, who has, on an investment of \$12,000, received in ten years over three hundred per cent gain, and possibly a larger sum, besides having developed in his community a thrifty settlement of negroes.

We have purposely elaborated this proposition, in order conclusively to show that these suggested improvements in plantation methods afford genuine self-help to any dependent, struggling class. By such means the thrifty wage-taker may not only become a lessee of the land, but pass from that condition to a proprietor of the soil; and, when once absolute owner of his person and surroundings, he is bound to take on a new and conscious manhood. With his best energies directed toward developing his possessions, his log hut gives place to a cottage, the pine bushes make way for fruit trees, the broom sage for flowers; the unstabled mule is snugly sheltered in a comfortable barn, while the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, the grunting of swine, and the cackling of fowls bear witness to thrift and prosperity. Nor is this all. Newspapers and books will be regular and welcome visitors to these rural homes, and the church, schoolhouse, and society will be neither forgotten nor neglected. Such, we predict, are some of the changes that will be wrought and results achieved during the years of material growth, in which the previous pauper freedman grows into true manhood and worthy citizenship.

That the changes which we have proposed in the relations of the freedmen to local economic conditions have passed beyond the tentative stage, and have become fixtures in Southern plantation life, is demonstrated by the fact that all of the Southern states furnish numerous examples of landowners who have leased their plantations to freedmen, and are burdened by no greater care than receiving rents and paying taxes. Other planters have subdivided their lands into small allotments, and sold them on credit to their former slaves and other freedmen, giving them ample time to pay for their purchases by the products of the soil. Such experiments have not only been attended with the most satisfactory results, but attest what success the plan would have, elaborated on a broader scale as in our suggestions. Nevertheless, a vital difference in the two methods exists, for it will be noted that where land has been leased to the freedmen, the planter's concern ceased when his stipulated rent was received; while our plan involves the training of the adult freedman in economical methods, as well as the education of his children, and in the end creating a home for them and providing means for its maintenance.

The obvious benefits to be derived from small, well-managed farms, when considered either as a source of profit to their owners, or with reference to their uplifting influence on a community, are not to be overestimated. Not only is industrial ambition stimulated by a personal ownership of the land one



tills, but every acre of ground brought under productive cultivation through such means adds to the actual and taxable property of the state. It also conserves public morals, and in manifest ways contributes to the welfare of mankind. White emigration to the South is yearly increasing in volume, and that fact leads to the belief that the mechanical industries will hereafter claim a greater share of Southern economic attention. Should such condition obtain, existing methods of cotton growing are likely to undergo a change. In that case it is not improbable that the present plantation system would be supplanted by small farms, each of them owned and cultivated, we trust, by its proprietor, as in France, where a majority of her agricultural class are owners of the land, or as in thrifty Switzerland, where out of 600,000 heads of families, 500,000 own the soil they cultivate. The German gardeners of Long Island and their frugal compatriots around Newark, New Jersey, have shown us what can be accomplished in this country with a small area of land through intelligent management and industrious application.

That the South contains millions of acres of fertile but untilled soil is not to be gainsaid; that the landless poor whites and negroes are industrial slaves is also an indisputable fact. When these two phases of Southern life are fairly considered, and the low valuation of land taken into account, no financial enterprise exists, we believe, which assures so large a return upon capital as judicious investments in

Southern agricultural lands, and letting them in small parcels to tenants, under fixed terms of occupancy and supervision. It may be like a "voice crying in the wilderness" to emphasize the social importance and economic value of this suggestion; but were this matter once seriously and practically considered, even from the dividend point of view, which is the most likely to win the heartiest response from the moneyed classes, we are thoroughly persuaded that the actual profit in rents would not only return enormous incomes to the investors, but in the near future open up a source of trade in interstate commerce without parallel on the continent.

"Land for the landless" is the burden of our contention, because we are well advised that neither the white nor black indigent classes will ever own land or become settled in sobriety and usefulness until, through some method of land lease, the way is open to them to purchase homes. Our proposition indicates the way for the creation of tenant communities located on small holdings. Five hundred dollars would be the maximum price of forty acres of excellent cotton land in any rural community. In fact, millions of acres of superior virgin soil could be purchased in many sections at a rate per acre of one-third this sum. But, assuming the average price to aggregate \$500 for forty acres, the question then for investigators to determine is, What will be the likely income? That is not a difficult matter, for, assuming that each tract of land would be let at a rental of

three bales of cotton, or its equivalent, every leaseholder would annually return to the lessor a cash rent of \$60, that is, an income of twelve per cent on a \$500 investment. Such income would be assured, even though cotton should uniformly sell at a five per cent rate. There is no probability that the selling price of cotton will ever go below that figure, and we have every reason to believe that it will generally be quoted at a higher rate. In that event, it will materially increase rental values.

The questions here broached are of national significance, and broadly appeal to the best instincts of American philanthropy, for the paramount intent of such a system of land culture is to develop stability and thrift in the working classes. But were this matter seriously taken in hand, in order to safeguard the interests of both parties, we should advise discriminate care in the selection of tenants, and that their leaseholds be subject to annual renewals. Such an arrangement leaves the way open for getting rid of objectionable tenants, and also operates as an incentive to well-doing to the industrious workers. Such, as we have described, are the economic and social forces awaiting wise exploitation. With money ruling at four per cent in financial circles, what safer or more conservative investment is offered to the savings-banks, the custodians of trust funds, and to persons of means, than that which the purchase of Southern lands affords; and where else would we find such permanent incomes,



and such absolute securities of ever increasing values, as in Southern fields and forests?

This is an age of organization for every phase of human activity. Capital concentrates in gigantic trusts. Skilled industry intrenches in powerful combinations. Philanthropy masses its resources under disciplined leadership, and all religions, in their best expressions and tenderest moods, plead for fraternal fellowship and common effort against the powers of darkness. Confronted by such conditions, we are sanguine enough to believe that Southern social and industrial problems are certain of eventual satisfactory adjustment, through the evolution of sound economic agencies. But so far the negro people have not found in these movements hints for their guidance, and, above all others, have refrained from joining in the grand march of events. Meanwhile, opportunities unsurpassed for acquiring homes and permanence are fast slipping away from landless poverty, so that, unless there shall come such a racial awakening as we have not hitherto witnessed, the negro will be thrust to the rear, and forever remain, as in the past, a poor illiterate, menial dependant. On the other hand, we are convinced that, were negro settlements of land-owners established, with their schools, churches, workshops, and stores equipped and managed by competent members of the race, they would be a source of genuine inspiration to thrift and manhood. One such example would surpass every other influence hitherto instituted for the redemption of the freedmen.

## CHAPTER V

### CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS

THE pure negro type, whether in India, Europe, Africa, or America, always displays those identical external characteristics which so markedly differentiate it from the rest of mankind. But while prognathous features and black hues are inseparable characteristics of negro people, it is well to keep in mind that color of any shade is erasable by admixture with contrary colors, just as a specific physical contour is readily changed by amalgamation with unlike physical forms. Both of these results have been, in many instances, effected among these people. Still, as neither of these processes has eradicated other racial traits, which are always exhibited where a preponderance of negro blood exists, we are forced to conclude that, apart from and independent of color and feature, there must be certain qualities inherent in the nature of the negro which differentiate him from other humankind as distinctly as either color or feature. Believing these surmises to be correct, it remains for us to show that this savage inheritance, modified but uneradicated, has been perpetuated in the American offspring of an African

ancestry. Such a task would be simple had the imported negro type maintained its characteristics free from any infusion of alien blood; in that event there is little reason for doubt that the freedman of our day would be hardly one remove from his African ancestors. The slave offspring, however, underwent a physical transformation, and foreign miscegenation changed a sensuous savage animal into a rational human creature, with a possible attainment to manhood and spiritual consciousness.

The negro undoubtedly constitutes the most unique feature in universal anthropology, and as such furnishes a subject for profound psychological investigation and social study. There is, of course, broadly speaking, a common agreement in the public mind that the negro represents an accentuated type of human degradation. Beyond this there is a wide divergence of opinion as to whether he is a normally constituted but unawakened member of the human family, a survival of an earlier type of man, or a specific type of indurated degeneracy. Much may be said both for and against each of these views, but the one pregnant fact of which intelligent mankind is conscious is, that the negro is in every essential respect wholly unlike other races of men. It is estimated that the pure and mixed negro types of the world number about 160,000,000 of people, though the mixed types, native and foreign, are largely in excess of the pure negro stock. It is also important to know that, while certain well-defined



changes may be wrought in negro physical character by amalgamation, yet, despite the degree and duration of such admixture, an aberrant preference for intensified negro characteristics is not infrequently exhibited. We assume that the negro is still burdened with the mental and physical weakness of his heritage; and we realize the sum of ancestral characteristics transmitted to a people of stationary habits is immense, and usually so great as to preclude racial variation. This knowledge will shed light on many perplexing features of race conduct which appear inexplicable.

But while there is degeneracy in our freedmen, it is evident that no man, white or black, is entitled to speak as an authority on this subject unless he has an accurate knowledge of the negro people. No matter what may have been a particular observer's opportunities for contact with the freedman, it would be impossible to get at the exact truth concerning them, unless he were free from racial bias. Above all, it is needful that such a one should be openly sincere, keenly observant, kindly disposed, and always ready to receive the unchecked confidences of a timid but wary people, and to have the ability to sort the true from the false. For even the freedmen do not disclose the secret impulses of their minds to strangers. It is not in excess of the truth to say that there is in the public mind an almost total ignorance of the negro; and as nothing so retards the exercise of sympathy and development of fraternity as want of

knowledge concerning the actual conditions of inferior people, we insist that it is necessary for the American people to know what the negro is, and it is no less important that the freedman should know himself. The acquirement of such knowledge should precede any movement instituted for race betterment. No white person is likely to acquire a veracious, all-inclusive insight into negro character in any capacity which involves such restraints as are imposed by the relations of master and servant, pastor and people, teacher and pupil, because such relations, even under the most favorable conditions, raise barriers that are bound to exclude, on the freedman's side, a frank, open expression of innate characteristics. The negro people are by instinct and habit extremely secretive, and, though verbose in speech, have, to a remarkable degree, a capacity for hiding their actual sentiments and intentions. This latter trait, however, is one widely made use of for self-preservation and defence by all helpless classes.

All human life expresses through physical, mental, and moral qualities the three fundamental endowments of its nature. We shall now deal with such characteristic traits as the mental, moral, and social nature of the freedman appears to disclose. True intelligence is, to speak from a scientific standpoint, "the exact conformity of the inner, to the outer order of cognizable phenomena." That is, the law of intelligent growth demonstrates all capable advance in knowledge to proceed from simple to complex

states of consciousness, each step of which is attended by accuracy of conception and adjustment of action to all preceding phenomena.

In applying these mental laws to the freed people the fair inference is that the supreme difficulty of the negro mind is its inability to parallel internal with external environing phenomena, because there is no apparent intelligent apprehension and adjustment of its internal mental states to external facts. The negro has all the physical endowments of intellect, but he has a mind that never thinks in complex terms, and, as it is wholly engrossed with units of phenomena, the states of consciousness aroused by visual or textual impressions rarely suggest sequences. The consequence is that the freedman exhibits great mental density, and gives conclusive evidence that he has neither clear nor distinct perceptions of specific facts, inasmuch as in every attempt at primary reasoning he falls into confusion and error. There is also reason to believe that the negro neither associates correlated facts, nor deduces logical sequences from obvious causes. He is largely devoid of imagination in all that relates to purely intellectual exercises, though he has fairly vivid conceptions of such physical objects as appeal to the passions or appetite.

There is then no intelligent comprehension and adjustment of the freedman's internal mental states to external facts, because the former is only engrossed with units of phenomena. That many negro people are incapable of associating numbers, beyond a few



elementary numerals, verifies this conclusion. We have an example of this kind in the Australian negro, the zero, so to speak, of all anthropological analysis, who is of such low development as to be incapable of dealing with other than units of ideas as well as of numbers. Of course, such mental conditions forbid any apprehension of simultaneous or successive events being acquired; and we shall infer that, so long as the negro is devoid of the power of introspection, he will neither have the ability to analyze his own defects nor determine his relation to external phenomena.

The accuracy of human knowledge, as is well known, depends on the number and quality of stored-up concepts, — that is, on the clearness and vividness of the images impressed on the brain; and for this purpose attention is the fundamental factor. Hence, it is not what our visual organs behold, but what, as a result thereof, is imprinted on the brain, which determines man's intelligence. It is just at this point that negroes fail. They see as much with their eyes as others do, but for lack of attention to details the mental images formed by external impressions become vague and indistinct. Having no clear notion of that which passes before them, nor of that with which they are in daily contact, neither the observed experience of others, nor their own under like circumstances, ever appears to teach them as similar conditions teach others. The negro, then, with a visual consciousness perplexed and a

subjective consciousness bewildered, always betrays in his normal states a lack of creative and constructive aptitude. Nor is such defect made good by any faculty of intuitive perception. What he undertakes is neither systematic in thought nor logical in statement, because his mind, — always dull and dense in repose, — when confronted by strange conditions, is not only slow to act, but exhibits an obvious want of cohesive strength. Nor is that all, for, like all people who are neither serious nor earnest, the freedman's mental attitude ceaselessly oscillates between depression and exaltation.

The negro not only lacks a fair degree of intuitive knowledge, but so dense is his understanding that he blindly follows weird fantasies and hideous phantoms. So great is his predilection in this direction, that he appears incapable of understanding the difference between evidence and assertion, proof and surmise. These facts warrant the conclusion that negro intelligence is both superficial and delusive, because, though such people excel in recollections of a concrete object, their retentive memories do not enable them to make any valuable deductions, either from the object itself, or from their familiar experience with it. The explication of such intellectual states is to be found in the fact that the chief mental anxiety of the freedman is for the immediate gratification of his physical senses. He lives wholly in his passions, and is never so happy as when enveloped in the glitter and gloss of shams. But while

the frankness of these reflections is only equalled by their veracity, we must remember that the negro represents an illiterate race, in which ignorance, cowardice, folly, and idleness are rife, and one whose existence is dominated by emotional sensations. It is only from this standpoint, and with this knowledge of his being, that his characteristic qualities can be fairly ascertained.

To those who know the freedman the fact is obvious that the highest aspiration of negro ambition is, not to acquire the essential spirit of knowledge, but to imitate mechanically what he only succeeds in caricaturing. He certainly is not an intelligent observer of facts, for he can seldom accurately describe objects of daily contact, and one may easily discover that there is no such thing in his mind as capacity for original definition and analysis. We are also thoroughly convinced that the negro mind is rarely awakened to responsive intelligence by meditative reasoning. Nor has it shown, generally speaking, such accurate understanding, sound judgment, and correct comparisons as would assure a comprehensive and discriminating grasp of a given subject. The freedman certainly does not realize that the aim and consummation of mental development is to know, to do, and to be; that real knowledge is a matter of reflection; and that such knowledge comprehends, not only a particular thing itself in contradistinction to all other things, but also its relation to all else.



Nor is the fact that the freedman readily acquires superficial familiarity with theoretical forms and symbols of learning any proof that he comprehends their significance. He may even excel in textual work along elementary lines indicated by defined rules, yet he is always entangled in abstract studies, for the reason that he accepts all postulated statements as complete fundamental truths. What he acquires is memorized statements, and not real knowledge, because the most clearly expressed principles rarely suggest to him concurrent ideas or develop new points of view.

To make our meaning clear we need only to state that when the negro acquires the terminology of things he vainly imagines himself endowed with a knowledge of the subject-matter represented thereby, and so gets credit from the unthinking class for a knowledge he does not possess. And his mental environment is not only complicated by the fact that in his quest for knowledge he never gets beyond unverified theoretical assertion and memorized verbal learning, but also because the opinions he asserts are echoings of second-hand utterances. He does not realize the absurd contradictions involved in such a course, especially in his many-sided attitude toward American ethical culture and social living. For while in each of these particulars the negro may appropriate to himself whatever feature in them serves his fancy, he does so with reference to its external effect, and not for any purpose of internal

personal change. Knowledge, refinement, truth, and honor are to the negro mind acquirable vestments that may be put on or off as occasion requires, but which in no sense work a reconstruction in the nature of man. These conclusions are easily verified. Any one fairly conversant with the negro people will readily recognize that intellectual veneer, which makes up so large a portion of its assumed culture, and which is invariably rubbed off and supplanted by an insufferable pomposity whenever it is forced into illiterate association. That what there is of racial scholarship has never passed beyond the mediocre and commonplace in mental character is due to the fact that the negro is always an imitator and never a creator.

As American philanthropy has never instituted searching inquiry respecting the fundamental characteristics of negro nature, it is pertinent to say that, if the foregoing deductions are correct, it follows that our negro educational methods are both wrong and profitless. There is an enormous waste in time, money, and results mainly because we have deliberately blinded the natural capacity and natural aptitude of the freedman by hedging him about with useless studies. It would have been far better for all concerned had he been taught a few essential things, and required to learn them intelligently and thoroughly. Two things especially he needs to do, — one is to cultivate a habit of self-reliance, and the other, to use his rational faculty in a common-sense way. He can do

neither now, nor has he any idea that enlightenment comes from within or that a man may be learned without being enlightened. Have we not said that mental growth is dependent upon the right adjustment of the mental organism to physical environment? That thoroughness in knowledge is the power to think conscientiously and accurately to correlate cause and effect? Sound educational training is a rational appeal to individual alertness, intelligence, and energy; it constantly sets knowledge against ignorance, and skill against incompetence. Culture and mind are not synonymous terms. It is well to know that a stalwart mental power, uncultivated, is of infinitely more value than the most thoroughly cultured feeble intellect could possibly be. But, inasmuch as the vacuous-minded negro possesses neither strong mental powers nor intelligent culture, he is never more than mechanical in mental assimilation. He has acquired a nomenclature of abstractions, in the belief that symbols signify knowledge, but he does not know that no man understands a thing who does not perceive its relation to all other things.

We do not decry negro training — on the contrary, our insistence is that he shall be trained adequately and wisely, but always with reference to the essential requirements of race life. It is useful knowledge, not useless smattering, which ignorance needs. We therefore believe that the end and aim of the race's education should be to inculcate self-respect,



self-restraint, prudent forethought, careful industry, honest courage, the grace of patience, the purity of maidenhood, the continence of youth, the nobility of manhood, the chastity of womanhood. But has this been achieved in a system of education which merely permits the negro to riot in a saturnalia of intelligent animalism? To be sure, he has pondered over mathematics and scanned the humanities, though neither he nor his teachers realize what insensate madness lies in such course. The educated class of the race — the result of such teachings — rarely seeks for truth in statement, but rather for rhetorical flourish, skill in contradiction, and word juggling, in order to confuse, bewilder, and impose upon their hearers, and to make those among the less informed believe them to be wise and all-knowing. So long as this shameless mendacity or pretence of learning continues, it will prove a fundamental hindrance to race awakening.

We all know that there is a tremendous difference between theory and fact in mental culture. Real education is acquired by training the individual mind, by the individual himself, to such a degree that it becomes an instrument of capable use in daily living. But as the negro scorns details, his intellect, we take it, is so constituted as to be incapable of indefatigable research or luminous penetration, and, so far as we can see, his chief mental outfit is nothing more than a facile memory for unconnected subjects. He always sees things in mass, with neither faculty for

close observation nor aptitude for analytical detail. He is an idle mental-incapable, with a self-satisfied knowledge that substitutes shadows for substance, darkness for light, sound for sense, chattering for wisdom. Small wonder, then, that our freed people are slow to comprehend their impotence and folly, but swift to display their ignorance. And as they are largely wanting in clearly defined ideas and executive ability, they are forced to copy the form and bearing of others, without knowing the reasons for their actions, a thing they will continue to do so long as their overshadowing curse is mental imbecility, moral induration, and spiritual stupor. Confronted by such conditions, it is obvious that the most transcendent gift to the negro people would be an endowment of universal intelligence. But for any such consummation in racial life current methods of enlightenment are useless as corrective forces. The negro is immoral; he must be endowed with morality. He is lazy, and therefore needs to be made industrious. He is a coward; he must acquire courage. His conscience is dead, his intellect dense; one must be resurrected, and the other set aflame by the light of heaven.

Not only do negroes lack the ability to acquire clear and concise knowledge of ideas and things, but in that which they appear to understand there is forever wanting judgment in its use. For example, words are, as we know, the vehicles of thought: thought, the vesture of ideas. Vague speech, therefore, indicates misty, incoherent conception, just as clean-cut

expressions show that the speaker has in his mind clearly defined mental images. Negroes have very meagre conception of the import of words, and are influenced more by sound than sense in their use. For illustration, we may take the word *virtue*, whose exact and complete significance no negro comprehends—who fails therefore to engraft its import into the fibre of his being. With him it is a vocal sound, and not a significant symbol representing actual, visible, living qualities. The same is true of words like *truth*, *honor*, and *integrity*. These are meaningless expressions; and because the negro cannot connect words with ideas, and ideas with realities, he lies with avidious readiness, and in all moods and degrees of enormity, without undergoing the slightest remorse, and often without any apparent sense of prevarication. He lies to please, to evade, to conceal, to excuse, to assert, to command. He lies to be heard, and will not be silent, though he has no truth to utter. He lies not to be outdone in speech and glibness,—to gratify his vanity, to satisfy his ambition, and win applause from credulous and illiterate hearers. But the main cause of negro lying is his eager, voluble, incessant chatter. He talks too fast and too recklessly to afford time for pause or opportunity to think; hence his indiscriminate use of words, and the frequently disagreeable, and sometimes disastrous, consequences that ensue from his ill-timed sentences and falsely gauged phrases.

It will readily be surmised that the negro idea of



conversation is a fluent use of words, uttered without any regard to truth or facts. That conclusion is correct. He will spend hours in talking about the most trivial things concerning himself and others. This disposition to chatter consumes an amount of time of the value of which he has not the slightest idea. Prattle is a source of infinite mischief to the freedman, for it leads him to be very inquisitive about persons; though it may be said, that, were he to expend half as much energy seeking to know the why and wherefore of things, as he employs in prying into the personal affairs of others, he would speedily become an intelligent and self-reliant being. As it is, though golden opportunities for acquiring knowledge and material gain lie all about him, such is his characteristic shiftlessness and so intrenched is he in mental stubbornness and foolish egotism, that he is never other than a sensuous dawdler, glorying in self-laudation. Negroes are always creatures of impulse; consequently they laugh and cry, not that the ridiculous excites them to merriment or pity to tenderness, but simply and solely because the vacuity of their minds is such that every passing sensation is likely to move them to hilarity or tears. It has been said by some one that to talk understandingly one must learn to listen well. The negro does neither; he talks to be noticed, not to entertain, reason, convince, acquire or convey information, but simply and solely to put himself in evidence for egotistical display and the gratification of personal vanity.

When silent he is not engaged in any endeavor to comprehend what is being said, unless he is the subject of criticism or his vanity is wounded. He is simply waiting, with bated breath and restless impatience, like a fresh charger on the turf, for the vocal exhaustion of his speech competitor, and on whose slightest pause he will, without regard to relevance or sense, instantly plunge in for the sole object of outdistancing others in chattering clamor.

It is no doubt difficult for any people, among whom a tendency toward exaggeration exists, to indulge in a discriminate use of language, and obviously well-nigh impossible to a race bred in an atmosphere of mendacity. These conditions actually obtain among the freedmen. The educated as well as the illiterate are under the same spell, and, though all are ever ready for disputatious speech, they are obstinately impervious to the voice of reason, inasmuch as they never heed the wisest advice nor hearken to the soundest experience, should either conflict with their physical desires. Really, the inferiority of the negro in mind, morals, judgment, and character is such that there is no doubt that some very plausible confirmatory evidence of the justness of the simian theory of human origin might be derived from a close inspection of his demeanor. For example, the animated negro is a frisky, frothy creature of overflowing frivolity in speech and action, though one who instantly collapses into a glum, sullen, spiteful reticence at the slightest rebuke. He is, when awake,

a person of ever varying moods, but one whom, when the curtain of unconsciousness is drawn over him in sleep, we fully realize to be scarcely more than a sensuous animal. These reflections apply to all phases of negro development, for all chafe under criticism and rebel against wise guidance, though at the same time all are vainglorious and credulous, craving flattery, and burdened with self-conceit. The freedman is not only grotesque in his buffoonery, but at times a consummate humbug, who is forever floundering between the summit of hope and the depth of despair, not only because he substitutes servility for humility, and insolent brag for modest courage, but rather on account of his insufferable pretensions. He assumes knowledge when densely ignorant, and to have wealth when sunk in deepest poverty. Assuredly, such self-sufficiency would be amazingly inexplicable, did we not know that he has an inordinate craving for all spectacular display which makes him the central figure.

There is a cunning astuteness about the nature of the negro which renders him an adept in deception, and consequently enables him to hide many of the shams of his life. So dominated by insincerity and false-heartedness is he that he is compelled to be a pretender whether he will or not. He has, therefore, neither manly courage nor veracity, and his life and living, founded on fallacious settings, is as artificial and stilted as one's knowledge of social functions would be if derived from a book of etiquette. More-



over, so great is his vanity, obstinacy, and self-complacency, that he never realizes the depth of his own stupidity nor its identity with that of others whom he upbraids, and whose follies he is ever ready to decry. Upon the average he is either a beggar or upstart, but in either case is incapable of self-repression in intercourse with his fellow-men. Moreover, in all his methods he is a petty schemer, and one result thereof is that many a white church has enrolled among its members mendicant freedmen who are there solely as gleaners of charity, and who exist in content on the crumbs that drop from the hands of sentimental philanthropy.

Again, negroes are wanting in the elements of solid affection and genuine sympathy for one another; for, though their speech is brimful of tender sentiment and vocal rectitude, yet so enveloped are they in a nimbus of charlatanism that the one is evanescent, and the other without guiding force. It would therefore appear that the freed people have no conception of the requirements of life or the amenities of society, — at least they always cast aside the substantial for that which is showy and flimsy. In speech they are silly and vaunting; in their homes, untidy and negligent; in their associations, coarse and vulgar. Their demeanor toward inferiors is pompous and arrogant, while their conduct toward superiors is always servile and craven. Moreover, as they are improvident and idle, their undertakings often begin in folly and shame, and end in sin and crime.

One of the chief reasons why negroes fail in vital undertakings is because they do not realize that there are near duties and remote relations, and that the nearest duty ought to take precedence in attention and performance. Then, again, as procrastination is the normal attitude of the negro toward every phase of activity involving labor, when he does act there is an invariable substitution of trivial for vital action. He has, moreover, an aversion to change which involves a deprivation of what he already understands and enjoys. When it is attempted, the preference is for movement along the line of least resistance to established usage, and where there is an obvious contribution to his sum total of sensational experience. Hence, while negroes are easily influenced by flattering appeals to their passions or vanity, they stubbornly resist everything which opposes their taste and inclination. By realizing these facts, we may readily understand how it happens that this people never apprehend the realities of life and living, and how the most wholesome, refined, and elevating suggestions for progress will be rejected so long as such instincts are the controlling factors of negro life and living. We shall get a deeper insight into this topic when we realize that the normal tendency of the mind of the negro is to rid itself of disagreeable conclusions. Moreover, such is his bias of character and perversion of intellect, that he resents rebuke for obvious shortcomings, and treats all racial criticism,

despite its elements of suggestive helpfulness, as the accusation of enemies. This characteristic is thoroughly exemplified by the manner in which the freedman meets his critics. His whole mental strength has hitherto been exhausted in faultfinding, complaint, extenuation, and deprecation, with grievances exaggerated and defects minimized. The fact that he has not shown any capacity for defensive reply is likely due to the very good reason that he has no effective response to make.

It may be well to say here that we have no intention of portraying the negro in any other character than his own, though to that end we have sought to lay bare the realities of his life. In so doing we insist that he is all and more than we have depicted him to be. In fact, we are confident that no one can make the slightest impartial investigation into this subject without coming to the conclusion that negro life is a makeshift, a conglomeration of specious expedients, evolved from high-sounding precepts that have existence and source in the pretensions of arrant hypocrisy. The conviction will also be reached that the freedman is overshadowed with an environment of appalling darkness, which, together with his preference for low conditions of life and living, interpose serious obstacles to his speedy redemption. As the matter now stands, it is obvious that the negro has no adequate appreciation of his infirmities, and that he appears to be so given over to self-conceit as to be unconscious of his



ceaseless blunders and the formidable antagonisms which they arouse.

Such facts as these are bound to be disclosed. Furthermore, as he has been drilled by constant iteration in the false belief that he is the moral equal of the best product of our development, a spirit of race glorification and contentment with slight achievement misleads him, and will continue to mislead so long as adulation is the height of race desire. Devoid of insight or belief in realities, the average freedman is constantly settling into reckless indifference as to conduct, and, with amazing moral density, even glories in obvious infirmities. But, notwithstanding these facts, there is a disposition among many well-meaning white persons to sympathize with, apologize for, and condone his gravest shortcomings under the plea that he is ignorant of his duty and responsibilities to himself and society. It should be needless to say that this attitude toward the freedman does no good, and is productive of infinite harm. What he needs is less sentiment and more sense.

Professor Bryce says the family is the fundamental problem of civilization; and Sir Henry Maine, in his "Ancient Law," shows that the family is the germ of all social and political organisms. Obviously a right conception of the nature, purpose, and conservation of family life is everywhere necessary to sound human development. But, as indicative of the falsity and shallowness of negro conceptions of life and

living, it may be remarked that neither the men nor the women of that race appear to appreciate the responsibility of family life. They certainly do not seem to understand that light, air, cleanliness of person, nutritious food, and decent association are necessary to their moral and physical well-being. For example, negro women will toil and drudge as servants of the white class, and perform with reasonable fidelity their allotted tasks; but when the same persons marry, and have the care of their homes, they will, in many instances, become slovenly and careless, and even refuse to perform the ordinary service requisite in every household for the preservation of cleanliness and health. Moreover, as most of them have a home demeanor and company manners, it is no uncommon spectacle to see the same class, who, in the seclusion of everyday living, habitually eat their food out of the same vessels in which it is cooked, and otherwise disregard every plain rule of common-sense social requirement, spend many hours of arduous toil in cleaning their houses and in cooking food for the purpose of entertaining some transient guest for a brief hour. Strange to say, the chief beneficiaries of negro domestic culinary bounty are neither relatives nor friends, but the itinerant black preachers, whose wanton ways and mendacious praise have wrought havoc in many a hard-toiling freedman's home.

The stubborn aversion of the negro to everything implying the substitution of precision and order for

impulse and disorder, as well as his purely mechanical adherence to irrational habits, may be exemplified in a hundred different ways. It will suffice to say, that nowhere are such traits brought more clearly to light than in that blind lack of discretion which he is wont to exhibit in the ordinary affairs of everyday life. Nor can such persistence in stupidity be attributed to ignorance of never-failing results; for negroes will, in spite of protest and warning, and the fact that in each instance repetition involves failure, deliberately, and of set purpose, continue time after time to do a particular thing in a certain way. For instance, they will indulge in inordinate eating, wear insufficient clothing, be negligent in bathing, and expose themselves to air-draughts when heated, notwithstanding their personal experience has shown them that any disregard of hygienic law is always followed by a swiftly inflicted penalty.

To particularize still further, it is well known that negroes are peculiarly susceptible to pulmonary diseases, and that, when attacked with consumption or pneumonia, they die like sheep stricken with murrain. This is a fact of which they are as fully conscious as others, but, nevertheless, they cannot be induced to take those precautions which sensible people usually adopt for the preservation of their health. Nor do they employ skilled physicians to any considerable extent, especially in the early stages of their illness, for, inheriting from their African ancestry a belief in the potency of gri-gri charms



and fetich incantation, they almost invariably resort to the nostrums of quackery. Consequently there are, in all of the large cities, North and South, among the race, so-called voodoo and conjure doctors to whom vast throngs go for amulets to ward off disease, and for treatment when sick. So firmly rooted are these superstitions, that, however much we may be inclined to pity the freedmen, regrets are useless and expostulations vain, inasmuch as they will only learn, if at all, in this as in other particulars, through the hard school of actual experience.

The reasonable conviction is that it is largely owing to these causes that, for a given period, the rate of mortality among negroes in our large cities is so great as to average fully sixty per cent in excess of the white race, — a fact that has more than a passing significance, for the excess of the death rate over the birth rate among the negro people shuts out any possibility of their attaining to formidable proportions in this country. Nevertheless, the most amazing feature in connection with this is the hopeless purblindness of the freedmen, for neither the tabulations of the census bureau nor the reports of municipal boards of health exert the slightest influence on racial habits of living. That the negro readily succumbs to every passing folly and is impervious to sense and sober reason is seen in any fair insight into his character. The question then arises, Can a helpless class, which forever requires suggestion and direction for wise guidance, ever rescue itself from degradation?

Seriously speaking, What is the negro, other than the unassimilated ward of Western civilization, and our chief exemplification of imitative conformity to its external models? A savage at heart, he is our most consummate representative of illiterate stolidity, a type whose habits and customs have been transmitted by ancestors through interminable ages of sameness, and whose history, whether in savagery or civilized submergment, is a record of lawless existence, led by every impulse and every passion. "He unites with the character of a child," as Sir John Lubbock has said, "the strength and passions of a man." Under such racial conditions the negro of to-day, bereft of ideals and barren of energy, is content to imitate whatever his sodden nature permits. He revels in the débris of antiquity, and with perversity appropriates for his ethical standards the lifeless symbols of cast-off beliefs, and for knowledge the discredited lucubrations of the Dark Ages. Besides, so great is his dependence in other respects, that his simple implements of daily use are the inventions of other hands, and such is his improvidence that, where nature is not his spontaneous provider, the industrial thrift of other races is relied upon to supply his simplest wants.

The social idiosyncrasies of the negro do not range over a wide field, but are limited to certain well-defined and easily ascertained characteristics. While other races share, in common with him, the traits we impute to him, they have in addition qualities which

he does not possess, whose virility subordinates and holds in check that which dominates in him. There is running through his nature a vein of mental perversity, of such fulness and force as to warp apprehension and vitiate veracious judgment, and demonstrate, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that he is wanting in the elements of common sense. For example, take the childish gullibility of the average negro, which is as amazing as the audacity of his ignorance. And yet he wants to be flattered and treated with deference; and he is likely to become sullen when any requirement commands him to take his place in the ranks of humanity, and bear a manly part in discharging its obligations.

There are between negro and Irish character many points of resemblance; for example, indirectness in speech, fondness for personal gossip, religious veneration, and social superstitions. Amusing witicism is also a trait common to both races. The negro, however, lacks continuity of endeavor. His temperament is neither heroic nor stable. His will is governed by mercurial and intractable ebullitions of moods. He is not thoughtful, and will not consider, though approachable and controllable for the moment through his vanity. This special racial feature is exemplified by the fact that, in resenting an affront or adjusting a controversy, the freedman is incapable of dispassionate action. In expressing indignation or in seeking redress, he must needs be wrought up to a high state of frenzy. The freed-



man's passions, however, are as fleeting as a summer shower. He may have received grievous indignities or suffered serious personal injuries that were deliberately inflicted, yet a little flattery will so excite his vanity as to cause him to forget his wrongs and become friendly with the wrong-doer, notwithstanding such truces knowingly open the way to a repetition of injuries and a renewal of enmities.

The evident shallowness of negro nature could have no other effect than to make the race fickle in every relation of life, and such is the restless disposition of the freedmen that they flit from object to object for no reason other than search for sensational gratification. But, while the lightness of negro temperament disqualifies him for forming either enduring friendships or harboring deep-seated revenge, it is also true that such instability of character seriously handicaps him for strenuous endeavor in any particular — a conclusion unquestionably demonstrated by the futility of ceaseless enterprises which negroes undertake, and which all others besides themselves know they cannot perform. The most hopeless feature of it all is that, despite constant failures, they never have any realization of incompetency. Some convincing illustrations of the negro's inability to gauge rightly his actual capacity are not hard to find. There are those who can sing simple vernacular songs with a fair degree of success, but who, despite their defective musical training, disdain, even to their own discomfiture and the public's amuse-

ment, to undertake anything less than the classical compositions of the world's renowned composers. Then, again, there are music teachers who ought to be in laundries, and dressmakers better fitted for kitchen service than for making garments. There are also numberless preachers and teachers so poorly equipped for their chosen vocation that one sees at a glance the physical industries have been deprived of some stalwart laborers.

There are some genuine musicians among the negro people, with voices of marvellous power and charming sweetness, and to that fact is doubtless due the popular notion that the freedman belongs to a musically endowed race. He is no doubt greatly susceptible to musical impressions, and, owing to his imitative ability and vocal powers, he does succeed fairly well in simple melody. But beyond that he must be regarded as a doubtful exponent of rhythmic cadences and harmonic scores. There is no question but that negroes may learn to sing, or that they do sing with great zeal and feeling, just as they learn to declaim well. They are not, however, creators and interpreters of music in any high artistic sense; that is, they have yet to show such inherent musical aptitude as is found in the German and Italian people. We should state, in this connection, that the current music known and sung as "plantation melodies" bears but slight resemblance to that which the freedman actually sings in his church and home. The deep pathos of words and weird melody

of expression is wanting in these transposed songs, which in many other respects are foreign to the life and habits of the freed people. A vital difference is also found in the fact that, while the negro platform songster is invariably mechanical in expression, and therefore insensibly caricatures what he does not feel, the song-abandoned freedman is filled with mental and physical rapture.

The morbid sombreness of negro character is evidenced by a manifest craving for attending funerals and gazing on the dead, it matters not whether the deceased be a relative or stranger. In many other respects the freedmen exhibit an abnormal disposition to gloat over the ghastly details of physical violence. We have seen men, women, and children gather in immense crowds to witness the hanging of a felon or the burning of a lecherous wretch by a frenzied mob. There is also allied to this brutal, morbid instinct a domineering spirit, which utterly unfits the freedman for rational self-control or the sane supervision of others. This characteristic, which is fully exemplified in the attitude of the negro ministry toward inferiors in station, and in the treatment of pupils by teachers, pervades every section of racial life. The freedman, therefore, is constantly on the lookout for something to domineer that is subject to him, as, for example, his wife, child, horse, mule, cow, or dog, upon whom he mercilessly inflicts brute force, as undeterred whim or temper inclines. So inexcusable are these brutalities, that they can only



be accounted for on the assumption that he is endowed with an imperviousness to moral sensibilities. He is, however, not a manly culprit, for, when detected in guilt, fear of punishment arouses all the cowardice of his nature, and he then becomes a cringing sycophant, but with neither remorse for crime nor contrition for wrong-doing. In fact, while he seems to make a mental distinction between moral and immoral acts, the negro is apparently unable practically to discern between right and wrong. The freedman's notion of social culture is often carried to absurd lengths, especially in the matter of speech, demeanor, and dress; though it cannot be that such oddities are the result of ignorance of social proprieties, for none is so merciless in criticism of each other's taste, or can point out with greater skill the incongruities in color, style, and effect of each other's make-up, as the freed people.

It is by no means our intention to exhaust the list of what are obviously racial characteristics. There are, however, other phases of the social habits of the freedmen which deserve a passing notice, but which, we fear, will only the more firmly convince us that these people have an inborn aversion to orderly methods and such social requirements as impose restraints upon impulse and passion. The negro lives only in the present, and though at times doleful in language and frantic in grief, he is, like a child, readily soothed by trifles and easily diverted by persuasive speech. He has both aspiration and desire

for higher living, but so long as he is overwhelmed with an all-pervading sensuousness neither will find expression in concrete form. If he could get what he wants without labor, he would possess the best that our civilization affords; as it is, he soon wearies of mental or physical strain, and studiously avoids efforts that involve prolonged toil. It may, therefore, be taken for granted that, so long as the freedman has unsupplied desires, and has no inclination to provide for them by work, he will have no scruples about appropriating to his own use whatever lies within his reach and fancy that other hands have wrought. This conclusion is fully born out by the example of those negroes who purloin chickens and the food products of their neighbors, rather than undergo the labor of raising such things for themselves. The same trait is illustrated on a higher scale by the negro preachers and others of the educated class, who will not go through the mental and physical effort necessary to the preparation of original literary matter, even when qualified for such work. We have known many persons of this character who would, without remorse or blush of shame, memorize the sermon or oration of some eminent person, or copy for insertion in a negro journal an already published article, and with incomprehensible vanity palm it off on their illiterate brethren as their own creation. We have also had some conspicuous negro speakers, whose lectures and addresses were written for them by scholarly white men; and in current

literature it is no rare thing to see a negro's name attached to a publication whose subject-matter was prepared by other hands.

The thoughtful inquiry is, What, after all, are negro ideals? Is the race really striving after purity, justice, fraternity, industry, sobriety, and intelligence; or is licentious revelry and illiterate idleness the dream and reality of its aspirations? These questions are to be answered in the light of facts; and facts show that for some potent reason negro men and women readily succumb to vicious inclinations, and dwell in an environment of their own creation, contentedly oblivious to the uplifting influences that lie about them. Such facts also show that ignorance, egotism, envy, and ingratitude are vices always uppermost in characters seamed and seared with animal instincts. Nor does it require a keen insight to discover that the freedman has neither intuitive nor acquired knowledge of such strength and power as would assure his emergence from hereditary thralldom. On the contrary, with no conscious sense of responsibility, the accredited spokesmen of the race are incessantly striving to shift their obvious duties to other shoulders, and lay the blame of their own misdeeds to other causes than their own shortcomings. Not only so, but they stubbornly interpose all the force and influence of their crude organizations for the prevention of individual awakening, and invoke a barbarous ostracism to subdue recalcitrant offenders. Moreover, the fact that in all their



undertakings the welfare of the racial aggregate counts for nothing, and the ambition of units counts for everything, justifies the presumption that race degradation awakens in negro preachers and teachers no earnest desire for its regeneration.

No sane person doubts that a sensuous faith and practice will always lead men away from God to unbelief, impiety, and physical degradation. With the persistent survival of ancestral fetich teachings that is just what negro religion has done, and is ever doing, for the freed people. What need, however, have we of marvel that the wanton vanity of an execrable religion should flaunt its defects in the face of light and truth, when negro hypocrisy, rioting in moral laxity and mental levity, is forever loud in its denunciations of any exposure of racial wrong-doing and has no reprobation for crimes or condemnation for criminals? It evidences a low estimate of life and its duties when men are found willing to defend that which makes for human degradation.

We have shown that the freedmen are ruled by whim and caprice; that they are inflated with vanity, and obstinately set in their ways; that the instinct for thoroughness is wanting in them; that they cannot or will not discriminate between rational advice and foolish suggestion; that they will not heed sensible admonition, and refuse to be corrected by reproof. We have also made it evident that the freedman, in no particular, stands in need of further

prescriptive teachings. He can already point out essential distinctions between right and wrong, though it is clear that, while abstract statements of truth are within the verbal range of negro vision, they have utterly failed to impress wholesomely his life and living. The negroes in a general way are conscious of their defects. But, so sluggish is their nature, to them the gulf between well-meaning and well-doing is well-nigh spanless. Such are some of the racial perplexities which the presence of the freedmen involves, and because of them the wisest of men are compelled to ask if there is hope that the negro people will ever awake to truth and righteousness. We do not despair, for, while we know that the supremacy of racial instincts assures continued degradation, we believe the freedmen can be regenerated, and will be whenever they are physically and ethically dealt with as they ought to be. Meanwhile, the freedman himself would make a notable stride toward self-redemption, were he to realize that his one supreme need is an energized capacity for moulding truth and righteousness into concrete forms of life.

This racial problem must be met in sheer self-defence. The question of national preservation is involved, and it will, at some time or other, be taken up and settled. Meanwhile, no thoughtful student of sociology can survey the social conditions in the South without reaching the conclusion that the presence of the negro people has wrought sad havoc

with the mental and moral habits of that section. The negro represents an intrinsically inferior type of humanity, and one whose predominant characteristics evince an aptitude for a low order of living. While contact with civilization has superimposed on his barbarous nature a superficial conformity to its outward requirements, such contact has failed to awaken in him a rational sense of personal needs, or to arouse a genuine desire for the realities of truth and right-doing. Such being the case, we are in duty bound to ascertain, by convincing practical tests, whether the dense mechanical mind of the negro can be endowed with an intelligence; whether his fleeting attention and roaming affection can be brought under steady control; whether his shiftless habits and slovenly ways, his destructive tendencies and unreliable performances, can be superseded by assiduous and painstaking acquirements; and lastly, whether his immoral tendencies can be eradicated, and moral aspirations awakened of such strength of purpose as will endow him with steadfast principles.

Physical disability is an unquestioned fact. There is such a thing also as mental and moral debility among the feeble races of men. Human life may be grouped into three classes: those guided by sane thought; those actuated by emotions; and those controlled by the cravings of the physical senses. We have already shown that the physical basis of life in the freedman is defective; that his intellect is feeble, his will unstable, and judgment untrust-



worthy; that he is preëminently lacking in sincerity of purpose and frankness of manner. It has also been shown that neither possible indwelling qualities nor external agencies have modified, to any appreciable degree, the essential nature and habits of a people who have never been otherwise than in a low state of racial development. But, inasmuch as character-building is a slow and laborious process even among the most highly favored classes, our advice is for thorough personal supervision and the use of forceful examples in negro management and training. We advise this, not only because negroes are weak in will power and in endeavor for right-doing, but because in this, as in other aspects of human evolution, we should never lose sight of the fact that faith and force rule the world of mankind.

The essential question involved in this matter is, What agency can effectively eradicate the admittedly vicious traits inherent in the negro people? While advice, persuasion, and exhortation have their place and function, none of them will suffice. There is no denial of the fact that negroes have been improved in knowledge and elevated in character, to a degree, through their contact with the American people; but what we do say is that such changes as have been wrought in them are purely imitative and external. Neither precept nor principle, though ever so luminous in the highest and divinest sense, can be impressed upon or inculcated in the character of a race which neither heeds admonition nor advice,

and which, when compassed with elevating and refining influences, is impervious to their teachings. There is common agreement that the evil instincts of negro nature ought to be eradicated, and, as the freedman is not amenable to verbal suasion, it is our conviction that, when appeals to conscience and reason fail of response, it is our duty to back up such commands for right-doing with force. We are, moreover, seriously inclined to the belief that, in a social organism of fixed ethical standards, all indwelling, non-conforming inferior types of mankind should be excluded or exterminated. Is this a barbarous suggestion? Assuredly not, so long as we absolve ourselves for summary executions by the plea that the good of society justifies them. It is far better to have individual extermination than national extinction. Besides, whatever we will or may say to the contrary, the simple truth is that the whole fabric of civilization everywhere rests on law and force. Obviously, then, so long as negroes are confessedly on the lowest rung of the ladder of social development, there is emphatic need of thoroughly safeguarding every step in their training with forceful and effectual methods of instruction.

We have sought in this discussion to indicate certain foundations on which the whole superstructure of negro social conditions rests. In this age of realism illusions should have no place, — and especially in a question of such perplexity as this, and one involving such vital issues. The negro, above all others, ought

to welcome honest race criticism, for in so doing he will discover that those who point out faults are not always actuated by vindictive sentiments; and he may learn that timely reproof and wise guidance may be derived even from the censure of enemies. What we have aimed to do, chiefly, is to convince the freedman that self-control, self-knowledge, and self-reverence are the keys to all power and all truth, because no man escapes from his sensuous Eden unless he first partakes of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. These virtues are profound endowments for any people. The negro will acquire them when he becomes imbued with a spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction with his present state. In that event, and not otherwise, will he have such a sense of responsibility and duty as shall make him amenable to a civilization which opens to all kindreds and tongues its avenues of knowledge and culture, and bids them Godspeed to the highest moral and intellectual altitudes their capacity will permit.



## CHAPTER VI

### ETHNIC BELIEFS

THE freedmen who are identified with sectarian religious societies will aggregate three millions. They are chiefly adherents of the Methodist and Baptist denominations, and have membership in eight distinct branches of the former and six of the latter. Of the Methodist freedmen, four-fifths are in affiliation with the five organizations under their own control, all of which, in doctrine and polity, are moulded after the Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as being, in character and management, identical with each other. The negro Baptist churches are conducted after the plan of the white churches of the same faith and order, but are otherwise largely under race management. They are inferior to those of the Methodist freedmen in many respects, especially in organized coöperation. Moreover, though their peculiar church polity has given their members unusual opportunity for sensible training in self-government, they have, we regret to say, evinced but little capacity in that direction. Notwithstanding the negroes are allied with different religious organiza-

tions, the sectarian freedman has no well-defined ethical convictions, neither does he have positive and steadfast notions regarding denominational distinctions, and will unite with one or the other as caprice may incline. Social instincts have much to do in promoting religious association among negroes, but, in the last analysis, church membership is to them what a paid-up life insurance policy would be to a prudent investor; it gives moral immunity on earth, and guarantees eternal bliss in heaven.

The prodigious multitudes which throng under the banners of negro religion are to it a source of weakness rather than strength, mainly for the reason that its adherents have no sense of accountability to authority, for in neither the homes nor churches of the race is personal discipline inculcated or enforced. The disorganization manifest in negro religion arises from the fact that its institutions are crude copies of misapprehended originals, the disowned offspring of an estranged paternity, the indifferent products and full-grown illiterates of our composite civilization. It is a religion glib of speech, but poor in ideas. By reason of its anomalous character it has never originated within its own environment a feasible movement for promoting the welfare of humanity, nor has it, at any time, made an important or valuable contribution to American life or morals. On the contrary, stubbornly refusing to consort and coöperate with other religious forces, it has been unable to impress contemporaneous Chris-

tian society with a considerate regard for its leadership or admiration for its achievements. To be candid in statement, negro religion shuns the light of intelligent contrasts, and avoids searching inspection, preferring racial segregation and sectarian isolation, where, amidst inexplicable contentment, it can ladle out to credulous benightedness defunct ideas, decayed sophistries, galvanized superstitions, and all the frayed and discarded emblems of physical inspiration. In doing this, it has wrought irreparable mischief in quarters where mental and spiritual mendicancy reign supreme.

The current trend of negro religious belief is chiefly responsible for the capricious and hampering conditions which hedge about and permeate negro life. For instance, it enthralls illiterate souls and blindfolds consciences by its methods of false scriptural exegesis. It accentuates individual helplessness and emphasizes dependence on unknown forces by a prominence which it gives through songs, texts, sermons, and prayers to a weird psychic guidance. Nothing is risked in saying that such ethical beliefs will not, indeed in the nature of things can not, rid the negro race of its characteristic defects, which are bound to resist any attempt at overthrow and displacement by substantial virtues, especially those appalling weaknesses attaching to them through inherited ignorance, inherited laziness, inherited unbridled desires, inherited apathy and cowardice. But it may fairly be said that negroes, in or out



of church relations, do not understand the force and bent of their inherent characteristics. Lacking a trained and comprehending intelligence, they are blind to every weakness, and of necessity ignorant of their incapableness, and are therefore unfit to exercise self-discretion and self-government. Furthermore, so long as human greatness is not a pronounced feature in their religious beliefs, one may rightfully conclude that their crude religious agencies, rioting in impiety and revelling in infamy, can never function that moral and spiritual potency required to regenerate the negro race.

Modern religion is represented by several ethical systems of more or less clearness of spiritual perception and purity of ideal. The Saxon standard of spiritual belief is the Christian, and among us the term "Christian" carries with it a sharply defined meaning; it embodies profound convictions and personal obligations to a distinct ethical ideal. That ideal is Christ, who not only enunciated principles, but wove them into life and living. He made character the goal to which all human endeavor should be directed, and exemplified a consummate manifestation of ethical truth in being and doing. Now the divine function and prerogative of every human soul is to possess discriminate knowledge,—that is, the ability to discern with unerring instinct the real from the unreal. Max Müller says, "Religion consists in a perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the

moral character of man." The highest appreciable manifestation of the Infinite is the life and teaching of Christ, by which we are made to understand that true religion is a spiritual growth having inception and perpetuity in sincere convictions of truth and duty. True regeneration is the life of God in the life of man, which in its outward manifestation exhibits two fundamental aspects,—a recognition of a supreme power to whose laws man yields due reverence and obedience; a recognition of a divine life within the souls of fellow-men, and therefore a recognition of the brotherhood of man.

Admitting these statements to be sound expressions of Christian truth, the question arises, To what extent does negro religion apprehend their significance and conform to their precepts? The answer is that the mass of negro religionists significantly fail to comprehend, both in their mental processes and actual living, the vital and fundamental principles of divine truth, and to that extent have no right to claim spiritual regeneration. This candid impeachment may provoke controversy, but only with those who wilfully shut their eyes to obvious facts or are blind to the logic of the situation. No intelligent observer can fail to note that the religious methods and ethical notions characteristic of a large body of our fellow-citizens are an irrational type of Christianity. For example, by the negro's code, it is impossible to predicate a divine power of absolute supremacy, who, as the embodiment of law, is

bereft of passion and divested of personality. To postulate such a being would be to the negro mind an anomaly, an incomprehensible and impossible phenomenon. The God of negro Christianity is a fetich of personal characteristics and human idiosyncrasies, instinct with passion, cherishing hate, harboring revenge, swayed by importunity, relenting to entreaty, gloating over suffering, and appeased by sacrifice.

The basis of all sound religious belief has three essential elements, viz.: a belief in deity, belief in future human existence, belief in the relation of the present life to the future. Now the negro is, pre-eminently, a religious being, and a devout believer in all things which lie beyond the scope of his vision or reason. To him, hell and heaven are literal abodes, one of endless pain, the other of eternal repose. The mansions of bliss are celestial homes; the garniture of glory, tangible realities; the apparel of the saints, actual garments of white, golden slippers, and dazzling crowns; the food of the redeemed, milk and honey; their recreations, songs of praise on golden harps. Hence, the negro has a vivid conception of a future life of compensation and fruition; of an actual deity he has more or less beclouded notions; but of the relations of the present life to the future he has but an inadequate conception. We must, therefore, for any intelligent understanding of the subject, interpret negro ethnic belief in the light of these facts, and in so doing we shall observe that, in its every phase of manifestation, negro religion



represents a conglomerate survival of ancient savage faith.

In his native home, the negro was a fetich worshipper, devoid of reverence, but possessed of superabundant awe of unseen gods. He was brought here with a savage religion ingrained in every fibre of his being. Once on these shores, he was inducted into a form of Christian belief, by force rather than by faith, which, superimposed on his uneradicated ancestral religion, has wrought a blindness of prodigious import. But the negro neither in slavery had, nor has he now, intelligent convictions regarding sectarian preference. As a slave, he was compelled to follow the religious attachment of his master; as a freeman he followed the whim and impulse of religious association. In his transition from slavery to freedom he underwent a religious change which may best be described by saying that while the freedman has a larger mental apprehension of Christianity, the religious slave had a deeper spiritual insight, and a more familiar acquaintance with Old and New Testament events.

The pastoral life of the slave gave him opportunity for meditation; he dwelt on prophetic visions, and the wonders of the Apocalypse enraptured his overwrought imagination. His religious instinct was quickened by the rapt songs of his race, whose music, so weird and plaintive in expression, often disclosed the sorrows and aspirations of its composers. Surprise has often been expressed that the negro should

have maintained such stolid passiveness in servitude. Such an attitude was in strict keeping with a faith that, in its higher reaches, unconsciously exemplified the martyrdom of patience, the heroism of despair. To the slave physical emancipation was a hope deferred, but endless freedom lay just beyond ; while there was toil here, there was rest hereafter ; of what avail, then, were bondage and stripes on earth, when death opened the gateway to a sensuous paradise ?

What we have striven to make clear up to this point is, that negro religion is primarily a sensuous faith built of incongruous matter. But in comparing the religion of the slave with that of the free negro, we are bound to admit that, while that of the former was crude in conception and illiterate in expression, it was loyal to the ideal which it sought to realize. In the case of the latter, with his larger opportunities and greater knowledge, there is a visible degeneration in spiritual appreciation, moral consciousness, candor of belief, and personal integrity. It is well to bear this distinction in mind, since what follows deals with the current phases of negro character and belief.

Turning to negro religion in its present form, the question is rightly asked, What is its comprehension of the functions of nature, human society, and Christianity ; and to what degree has it contributed to the solution of the problems of the present day ? Still further, To what extent does it conform in precept and practice to the enunciated principles of sound

Christian polity? For answer, neither evasive shibboleths nor subterfuges will suffice, in the presence of that infallible test, "By their fruits ye shall know them," — the one inexorable criterion for determining all shams and realities. Millions of nominal citizens are in our midst, who by their every instinct and act are aliens to the Christian culture of this hemisphere. In consequence of their adherence to an ethnic religion which is functioned by a priesthood as illiterate as themselves, and whose scandalous follies set at defiance every canon of the decalogue, we have in them a significant menace to the civilization of this age.

Under existing conditions the negro priesthood is largely recruited from a pretentious class who enter the ministry for social recognition, for official preferment, for idle maintenance and unearned support, and who, by deliberately shunning contact with intelligence, rarely become conscious of their own shortcomings. They are filled with conceits, and prate with glib assurance and authority about the most abstruse subjects, under the vain impression that they possess an amazing fecundity of learning, — although the paucity of their knowledge is transparent to others. As passed masters in the art of dissimulation, they evince wonderful skill, and in the acquisition of scriptural phraseology they can reel off Biblical texts with such deftness as to deceive even the "elect" with their show of sanctity, — which only proves that speech and action are distinct things. No people can speak more know-



ingly of Christian obligation, and none are less observant of its duties. And their manifest disregard of the ordinary morality of daily life leads to the conclusion that "though ever learning, they are never able to come to a knowledge of the truth."

It is an open secret that many negro preachers who have attained great notoriety within their race by solemnly masquerading in garments of seeming righteousness, find intense satisfaction in praise evoked by pulpit effusions, the original material of which was got together through indiscriminate pilferings. In fact, the freedmen have but few preachers among them who do not purloin their discourses from the printed sermons of white ministers, but whose illiterate mannerisms so distort the original as to render it of little value. Plagiarism is not the sole crime of our current negro ministry. It is well known that desecraters of human welfare boldly stalk into negro sanctuaries, overshadow the pews, dominate the altars, invade the precincts of domestic life, despoil the family fireside, and through bewildering sophistries yoke virgin innocence and brazen guilt. It must be confessed that ungodliness is triumphant when negro temples of worship are turned into debauching rendezvous, with prayer-meetings transformed into séances of sensuous contortions and physical frenzies. Human regeneration is out of the question where material greed riots, and eternal conflict is waged between a dollar and a human soul, with the inevitable sequence that the dollar wins,

and that too in the face of the divine mandate that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

These are serious charges, but so capable of substantiation that outraged humanity has a right to rebuke the audacities of selfishness. Tricks and tricksters are forever out of place in a Christian church. Vulgar pomposities and brazen mendacities in leadership and power should not be tolerated nor endured. Leadership ought to mean men of clear discernment, of robust insight, of direct determination, and forceful energy; men of thrift, of indefatigable industry, and eternal alertness; men of moral affluence, the wealth of frugality, veracity, punctuality, and diligence, qualities of mind and heart that are the woof and web of all values. In brief, the need of the hour in negro life is inexorable realities; that imperative need should cause all shams, pretensions, subterfuges, evasions, insincerities, and exaggerations to flee from honest daylight and hide themselves in everlasting darkness.

That negro religion is worthless as a factor in race regeneration is a justified conclusion in face of the fact that the most heinous crimes are committed by those who read and write and are members of negro churches. It may be said that these negro culprits are "sinners fallen from grace." But may it not be fairly inferred that the "saints" of the race are wanting as examples of wholesome living? Can it be truthfully denied that the great majority of

the professedly religious negroes are visibly seamed and seared with carnal vices, or that falsehood, hypocrisy, pilfering, and drunkenness are but minor vibrations in an ascending gamut of "saintly" turpitude? But while it is a foregone conclusion that the social and religious demoralization of the negro is great, there ought to be virility enough in American negro manhood to face the truth regardless of whither it may lead. In fact, no person of intelligent discernment can be found who will admit that he is contented with the present attitude of current negro religion, or affirm that it is either a vital factor or regenerative force in racial life. For charity's sake, good intentions will be conceded, even where ignorance riots and idleness revels in turbulent luxury,—but always with the reservation that where the "spirit was willing, the flesh was weak." Negro religion is unconscious of the tremendous upheavals going on around it, either in ethical thought or practical Christian living, and is impervious to the impressions which these processes have wrought elsewhere. Hence, the issue here raised, in truth the sole problem, is, Will the existing negro religion bestir itself?—can its lethargy be shaken, its excrescences shorn?—has it the ability to appropriate new ideas, evolve lofty aims, and, animated by the freshness and vigor of a new truth, take a place among the forces of modern Christianity?

One insuperable difficulty confronts any undertaking aimed at race redemption, if directed by purely



negroid agencies, and that is, the moral instability of negro character. One might as well attempt to weave a rope of sand as to direct a people swayed by impulse, torn asunder by petty jealousies, and dominated by selfishness, people whose abnormal egotism is overlaid with dense ignorance of eternal verities, an ignorance, too, that, barren of satisfying resources within itself, is dependent upon external excitants for gratification, and in consequence is driven by restless and unappeasable desire to gross physical excesses. No people are to be regarded as morally sound who are willingly ignorant and vicious, and just so long as the greater number of them is averse to acquiring sound judgment and lofty ideals of truth and duty, their redemption will prove a chimerical conjecture. Another thing is certain: any religion is a sham which does not make of its disciples better men and women. And for the vitalizing forces that would accomplish this the present religion of the negro cannot stand the ordeal of searching inspection. Such inspection would expose the demoralization of its adherents and the hollowness of grotesque forms, which are ridiculous and even pathetic by reason of their abnormal decrepitude. The perpetuity of these conditions accentuates the ethical depravity of the negro. We believe racial regeneration to be possible, but at the same time absolutely contingent upon a radical change in the religious ideas and actual living of the freedmen. The ability to know God is the highest aspiration of

the finite mind. But as negro religion, by statement and method, strives to stifle in the minds of its followers every intelligent reaching after divine truth, we are constrained to believe that it lacks the power of self-redemption, and will never, unaided, rid itself of gross deceptions.

Vinet, with sententious brevity, has aptly said that Christianity is conscience raised to the highest exercise. Man's supremest need is the courage to be right and to do right. A coward is a moral monstrosity and cravenness the source of iniquity, because fear, leading either to ferocity or falsehood, blocks the way to moral betterment. Now, in the light of these statements, what is the opportunity and duty of self-respecting negro Christianity for religious awakening, for loyal agreement, for nobility of purpose, for life now and hereafter? Its chief and foremost duty is to make character the sole test and criterion of a Christian life, and to see to it that a life devoid of courage, veracity, sincerity, and honest piety is not rated as a Christian character. Already in this matter a negro manhood and womanhood is astir, whose efforts to free the freedman's mind and morals from sensuous chattelism neither bigotry with audacity nor ignorance with numbers can defeat; for, having themselves become disentangled from ethical depravity, they are implacably arrayed against it, with neither belief nor confidence in the methods of negro religious teachers. There is growing up within the race a new school of religious believers, and the

cleavage between them and the old is impossible to close. The old represents dreams, shadows, misdirected energy, impeached veracity, ephemeral fidelity, deficient judgment, and thorough satisfaction with specious achievement. The new exacts character, consistency, integrity, industry, common sense, simplicity, clearness, beneficent service, and, above all, fervent piety in word and deed. But unfortunately the awakened are a very few, with whom the sleeping masses have no fellowship; however, God is patient, and waits long for men to learn his lessons of truth and justice.

It is a grave misfortune to negro humanity that its sectarian religious organizations are wanting in an intelligent and educated priesthood; a ministry of clean-handed and clean-hearted men; teachers of righteousness consecrated to human service, and loyal to the truth; a ministry of men, endowed with common sense, that finite quality of infinite origin, which invests its possessors with wisdom and understanding, and teaches them to shun folly, to do right and be right, and to know the highest needs and wants of their fellow-men. To be sure, a group of nondescript negro schools exists, which are assumed to supply every conceivable need, but their educational methods and means are of a poverty-stricken sort, and wholly inadequate to meet existing wants. Besides wasting a wealth of energy on ostentatious vanities, these bawbles of pedantry never undertake to develop in their pupils integrity



and veracity. They utterly fail to instil into the negro mind any comprehension of the higher functions of life, or to originate any influence that sorts the true from the false, or the wise from the simple of the race. No doubt, defective ethical thought is responsible for much that is amiss in negro life. The divine dictum, "As a man thinks, so he is," finds but slight credence among the illiterate who have never learned, and openly deny, that true spiritual vitality depends upon right conceptions. We have, therefore, no clear evidence to show that the freedman believes the beginning and continuance of human regeneration is in sound convictions of truth and duty, and that growth in Christian grace and knowledge is attained only by following the line of conduct set forth in the teachings and life of Christ.

Again, what negro religion needs is a leadership endowed with divine instincts. Its present leadership has never learned the lesson of self-abnegation, nor the law that "he who would save his life, must lose it" in self-forgetfulness. For a pertinent object-lesson in this direction our negro priesthood of all degrees might turn with profit to the inspiring example of personal effacement furnished by the Roman Catholic Church, within whose folds the petty ambitions of its priests commonly count for little. The supreme good of the church, they are drilled, is the first and foremost consideration. Pontiffs, cardinals, bishops, and priests come, go, and are

forgotten, while the fixed aims and definite purposes of the church move on with measured pace their destined way. The lack of competent leadership, of adequate endowment, or rather, we ought to say, the presence of negro leadership with extinct ideas and of impious hypocrisies, has driven the race into dangerous, and forsooth almost inextricable, passes. Among them there has been a shifting of burdens, a shirking of duty, with sloth set over against industry, cowardice against courage, and notorious mendacities and impious wantonness have revelled without shame and without remorse on the reckless shearings plucked from deluded flocks by the hand of rapacity and greed.

In extenuation and excuse it is sometimes said — although the French have it, that he who excuses himself, accuses himself — that the negro has had no opportunity for acquiring practical experience in large public affairs ; and what he evidently lacks in clear insight and capable efficiency is to be attributed to race exclusion from power and place rather than to any inherent deficiency in actual capacity. Such claims are the sheerest folly. With social conditions awaiting a guide, the requisite qualities for capable leadership are in individual life ; and the logical inference is that where such qualities are not in evidence, they do not exist. What more magnificent field for exploiting capable faculties or deploying trained forces exists, than that afforded in the domain of negro religion. Do not its surging millions offer

opportunity and inspiration alike to souls aflame with genuine ability to mould and direct? Within its folds multitudes of earnest men and women, with millions of consecrated dollars, await the call of wise activity for beneficent service; still no hand is raised to blaze the way.

Race guidance such as we have displays marvellous shrewdness and consummate craft in pandering to vicious followers for place and power; but beyond the meretricious notoriety it acquires, it cannot be credited with praiseworthy motives or noble acts. Unexampled opportunities for beneficent service to humanity are constantly thrust in its pathway, but they, in every instance, are flung aside either through wanton recklessness or ignorance of means to utilize them. With such conclusive facts before us, we cannot afford to extenuate racial shortcomings or condone its misdeeds. The American negro, in and out of church relations, is passing through a crisis, and, with the odds everywhere against him, is being tried and tested as never before. Incompetent leaders and their despicable methods must go; greed and selfishness have no right to beguile negro credulity. The necessities of the race, the good of humanity, require that men of human insight and business sagacity, having the capacity to conduct themselves and affairs intrusted to them along sensible and helpful lines, should be set in places of leadership and race guidance.

The obvious inefficiency and weakness of negro leadership is further emphasized by the fact that race



churches have not escaped the evils of sectionalism. A senseless degree of hostility exists between the sectarian organizations of the North and South, and bitter animosities have usurped the sway of peace and good will. The freedmen do not seem to realize that strife is a formidable impediment to their advancement, and that no servile and oppressed people can afford to quarrel among themselves. There is, among negroes, not only a strong undertow of prejudice, but, within their local religious organizations, mismanagement, discord, and disintegration are characteristic features; and we have yet to discover a single sectarian society under negro control that has evinced a capacity for wise self-government. Meanwhile, the gravity of such defects become more pronounced when the fact is recalled that negro sectarianism is not original in its polity, but is a more or less imperfect transcript of already established white organizations.

Into every movement for reform two elements must enter. The first requirement is an adequate knowledge of existing evils; the second requirement, a willing capacity to correct them. We have shown that the negro is not endowed with an inherent sense of law and order. Neither protest, entreaty, nor example has ever effected a transformation to this end in his character. The first step toward the sound regeneration of his nature is to eradicate, root and branch, his lawless impulses. We are of the opinion that no effective means can be devised for that end which does not have as its

chief factor efficient coercive force. But when the negro has been brought to a condition of willing obedience to law, the second step in his awakening is to create within him such a conscious self-respect as will develop manhood and instil integrity into every fibre of his being, so that, by giving practical evidence of ability and capacity to appreciate sensibly and discharge properly the duties and responsibilities of life, he may deserve and win the confidence of religious contemporaries.

The necessity of negro regeneration having been established, the initial instrument for racial awakening is in our judgment sectarian disintegration. And we further believe that the most consummate agent for the redemption of the race will be found in its subjection to a superior white Christian supervision. We discriminate advisedly in using the expression, *superior white Christian supervision*, for nothing less than the best ethical thought and example would be of the slightest value in such an undertaking. We are well aware that intolerance, bigotry, selfishness, and fanaticism are directive in many phases of white Christianity. Of that sort of tutelage the freedmen have had a surfeit. What they now need is the guidance of men conscious of God, and free of soul, conscience, and intellect, who fully recognize their moral needs and are adequately qualified to administer to their wants. The chief function of Christianity, as we understand it, is to deal intelligently with every issue affecting human welfare, and

unquestionably the best interests of society are involved in raising this submerged class. In fact, American Christianity can render to God or man no greater service than that which would come through its fraternal union for negro redemption. Nor are conclusive examples wanting to prove that, when negroes are placed under capable white leadership, they become more intelligent in method and more faithful in performance than when left to their own guidance, where many of them now chafe under restraints imposed by a leadership that does not command their obedience and respect.

The negro ministry will no doubt raise vigorous objection to the suggestion that their religious organizations ought to be placed under the supervision of competent white oversight; for, though gulping with avidity every form of specious praise, they revolt at wholesome correction and repel with sensitive resentment adverse criticism. Still, substantial reasons exist why this should be done, and, among others, the following are noted as foremost. Negro religionists are always wanting in either clear or abiding conceptions of Christian principles; they are not endowed with a steadfast devotion to truth and duty, nor have they achieved, through their current religious methods, any visible uplifting of the negro race. Furthermore, their ethical platitudes are in deserved disrepute, especially that preposterous contention for the rightful existence of heinous vice and godly grace in the same person. That is to say, this spe-



cious postulate affirms that bodily sin and spiritual regeneration are compatible, coexistent facts, on the ground that physical and spiritual natures, being separate and distinct entities, physical acts do not involve or contaminate the spiritual essence of man. Now the inevitable sequence of such duplicity is that these negro religionists with great assertiveness arrogate to themselves exalted virtues, but at the same time, deliberately and of set purpose, follow their own vicious inclinations. Infamous vices, therefore, fail to awaken in the religious freedmen repugnance, but rather induce a condition of moral obliquity, which condones crimes and approves, or is indifferent to, venality. They seem to have neither the ability nor desire for self-purgation from evil. It is not unfair to say, that self-extrication is impossible to a people wanting in strong mental qualities, and who evince little capacity for moral progress. The negro, then, has a choice of two courses: either to drift soul and body into eternal perdition, or else, with an awakened sense of imminent peril, to commit his mental and moral guidance to the trained forces of an advanced Christian civilization.

We have endeavored up to this point to indicate the leading characteristics of negro religion in order that enlightened evangelical sentiment might fairly judge to what extent it deals with eternal verities and chases shadowy phantoms. We shall now undertake to show how these traits and impulses may be directed into channels of usefulness and godly living.

But here, as in other phases of this question, the subject must be dealt with from a standpoint of ethnic psychology, and with reference to all its related facts. As we see it, the fundamental defect in negro religion is not a want of mental cognition, but a spiritual inability to realize the essential import of Christian truth. There is no assimilation of ethical principles, nor application of them to everyday living. To the negro, religion is a transient impulse, a kind of hypnotic sensation, a thing entirely apart from and outside of ordinary life and duty. What we should seek to do, then, is to awaken in him a sense of spiritual realities, to restrain and direct the exuberance of his emotions. In his nature intelligent guidance and moral stamina, combined, ought to develop some of the finest qualities of perfect manhood and ideal Christianity. Nor does such a consummation appear difficult of achievement, when it is fully realized that, in dealing with the negro, we are dealing with a primitive people, of crude ethnic beliefs, but of warm generous impulses and misdirected energies. We need also to keep to the fore faith in the belief that human regeneration and personal redemption are realities, and that divine truth has the power to evolve, even in a people now sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, a life consecrated to love and duty.

We believe American Christianity has, in the person of the negro, an unmeasured wealth of latent spiritual energy, which will be aroused and conse-

crated when the notion of sacerdotalism is scattered from before his clouded vision, when transmitted ethnic fetichism is eradicated from his religion, and the virility of his nature, bared of empty forms of righteousness, is breathed upon by the spirit of God himself. With all the better instincts of their being stimulated by the white heat of endeavor, under a conscious knowledge that transmitted crimes do not shut men out of the kingdom, nor paternal faults and maternal follies close the door of divine kinship against them, what shall hinder even sensuous and illiterate negro humanity from becoming regenerated by the ideals of truth and righteousness? There is a well-founded conviction that in all men there is a spiritual force which yearns for divine realities, for love, sympathy, justice, and mercy, and that it is of such vitality and potency as to fill wasted lives and blasted hopes with divine immanence, and re-create manhood and womanhood in battered and shattered human forms. Such moral cravings of souls a-hunger for truth and godliness are more than psychological hallucinations. There is "a power not in ourselves, that makes for righteousness." With a spiritual insight ennobled to luminous penetration, those Christian forces will become sublimely great that have the prescience to see the glory of humiliation, the riches of poverty, the exaltation of abasement, the radiance of self-sacrifice, in disinterested service to hungry, starving souls, crying daily for the bread of eternal life.



The trend of current events in every channel of secular human activity is toward concentration of effort by union of common aims and interests. In this respect the children of the world evince a subtle wisdom that the children of light might with advantage strive to attain. We say this because it is well known that internal dissensions and sectarian strife sadly handicap the usefulness of Protestant Christianity, in many of its commendable ventures. For example, take American Methodism, which is split into a half-score of separate organizations, though none of them is grounded on such a solid Christian basis as to justify distinctive existence, and all of them appear to be deaf to those valid reasons which common sense urges for the fraternal and actual consolidation of like religious bodies. Among those Methodist religious societies which maintain separate organizations on what is conceived to be purely sentimental grounds, are the Methodist Episcopal Church, the parent of Methodism on the western hemisphere, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The slave issue rent them in twain in 1844; the presence of negro membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church deters reconciliation and denominational unity in the dawn of the twentieth century. Such an experience, if it teaches anything, shows that sectarian strife is not Christianity; that identical interests should coalesce; that fraternity is vitally important to the moral and spiritual welfare of the membership of both organi-

zations. Moreover, the incoming age of applied Christianity, emphasizes, to a luminous degree, the imperative need of concentration and consolidation along every line of effort, mental, material, and ethical.

As to the two sects in question, we undertake to say that no insuperable obstacles to union exist, and, should mutual concessions be made and prudent forbearance exercised, the reunion of these two Methodist bodies will inevitably follow,—a consummation that will bind with indissoluble bonds its evangelical forces for efficient warfare against the powers of darkness. Among those who ought to know, it is the current belief that the chief obstacle to the union of Methodism, North and South, is the negro adherents in the former body. Should this be true, it may be fairly questioned whether such an insignificant feature should stand in the way of a movement that involves such tremendous possibilities of service to God and man. Moreover, if negro membership in white Christian organizations is a menace to their organic welfare, or a hindrance to their ethical usefulness, we would deem it the very essence of Christian wisdom to eliminate such disturbing factor, both as a genuine service to the freed people, and as a duty that American Christianity owes to the welfare of mankind. We are profoundly interested in sound negro development, but, having substantial reasons for believing that we are thoroughly familiar with that question in all its phases, we feel justified in

saying, that the ignorance and depravity of the freedmen will neither be checked nor eradicated until the white Christian South joins hands with the Christian North in a determined movement for his mental and moral regeneration.

It is in consonance with this sentiment that we now suggest a process of racial elimination, alike feasible and honorable to all concerned. We propose that the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church should elect two or more capable bishops from among its negro ministry, and set apart under their supervision its freed members into a separate organization. The Methodist Episcopal Church South did this with its negro members in 1871, and they now constitute that large body known as the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. We take it that, with the negro out of the way, overtures for organic union would be immediately forthcoming, and that the Methodist Church, North and South, would, at no distant future, become harmoniously united in sound Christian fellowship. Grant that such a union takes place with the agreed understanding that the united Methodist influence will be exerted to effect a unification of the newly created negro Methodist organization with the present Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, and, in the face of such insistence, there can be no doubt that their union would follow as a matter of course. Such a consummation effected under the name and title of the latter organization would prove of inestimable value to the cause of negro



uplifting. Then suppose that this united white Methodist body, in keeping with its characteristic evangelical spirit, perpetuates its Freedmen's Aid Society, both North and South contributing alike to its aims and purposes; that it also retains control of all educational institutions now devoted to the training of negroes, and, by educating their ministry, maintains a corrective and praiseworthy supervision over the negro Methodist brotherhood. Would not the practical benefits to Christianity and to both races abundantly justify the wisdom of such a movement?

So far as it relates to the freedmen, this proposition is worthy of candid and dispassionate consideration. The gravity of the negro question is daily becoming more serious and complex. This suggestion points out a way for the evangelical betterment of race life and morals unreached by any other means. It implies, not only a union of the segregated negro dependencies of white Methodism, but perforce a single organic combination of all branches of negro Methodism and the ultimate federation of every phase of Methodist polity in America. Moreover, a union of these two great white Methodist bodies, made on these lines, will do more in itself to eliminate sectionalism and unite the people of the North and South in fraternal brotherhood than any event that has taken place since the foundation of our government. Christian patriotism lies at the core of this matter, and neither sectarian nor sectional sentiment should be permitted to thwart its consumma-

tion. Finally, such a union would pave the way for the creation of the most powerful Protestant religious organization on the western continent, and to that extent would render it capable of incalculable service to the world of humanity at large.

What has been said concerning the opportunity and duty of the Methodist Episcopal Church with reference to organic union applies with equal force to the several branches of the Presbyterian Church, which are placed in a similar dilemma by reason of negro adherents whose elimination is necessary before a union can be reached and wholesome evangelical fraternity achieved. White religious societies, under Congregational government, for reasons already pointed out, will not prove efficient factors in this scheme of race redemption unless the settlement of negro pastors and the control of church property is vested in a board of white trustees having exclusive supervisory jurisdiction of both. But with these two features so safeguarded they could render incalculable service to the freedman. In fact, to secure moral uplift and financial stability, all church and school property in use by the freedmen should be held in trust for them under honest white management. As it is, negro management is both reckless in contracting debts and wanting in means to meet obligations; hence the stress and strain of ill-advised undertakings carries with it poverty and discouragement to all concerned.

Progress is the key-note of all true life and living, hence, should evangelical Christianity wisely bestir

itself in behalf of negro awakening at the threshold of the twentieth century, we have confidence to believe that the shadowy dreams of racial growth will eventually give place to substantial realities. For, when the mists of credulity and superstition shall have cleared away, there will arise genuine reflections of the divine life within the reclaimed negro.



## CHAPTER VII

### MORAL LAPSES

MAN is not a law to himself; on the contrary, he is both the product and subject of law. He is a rational being, and as such is cognizant of the existence of moral and physical laws. He further understands that conformity to these laws constitutes a sane attitude of mind, that non-conformity is followed by pains and penalties above and beyond human infliction. From these fundamental principles of life, which apply to all men and are equally obligatory upon all, man has derived a feasible and comprehensive standard of right and wrong conduct, — one by which the civilization and morality of men is measured. When men have agreed upon a normal standard of living, and fixed the boundaries of right and wrong, it is obvious that henceforth the social status of a race is to be determined by the degree of conformity or resistance which a majority of its people evince toward such established rules of conduct. The sum of racial greatness is never more than the whole product of individual power minus the sum of individual weakness.

A man, we say, is good or bad, according as he conforms to or departs from the spirit of sound

ethical deportment. But it cannot be assumed that he is good or bad in an absolute sense. In like manner a person is said to be ignorant or learned, notwithstanding the fact that no human being is so untaught as to be entirely devoid of some degree of intelligence, and that the greatest human erudition is limited by insurmountable mystery. What these relative terms are meant to indicate is that a manifest excess of immoral inclinations in a given individual is evidence of vicious intent, just as a preponderance of rectitude is indicative of ethical obedience. There is no other criterion, and by such discriminations the dividing line between the vicious and virtuous of mankind is ascertained. Such endeavors are not only landmarks of growth or monuments of folly in any people, but it is absolutely true that the actual condition of any given portion of mankind is nowhere more clearly exemplified than in their moral conceptions, their ideals of truth and duty in everyday living, and the character and aim of their social and civic institutions.

But no intelligent comprehension of social subjects will be reached, unless it is fully realized that the home life of a people is the most vital of all civic or social institutions. We need, therefore, in order to secure trustworthy results when dealing with inferior types of people, to ascertain correctly the drift of the moral impulse of that people, and what social order they sanction in their family life. In any examination into the moral condition of the freedmen, these

observations are to be kept in mind. To know the negro people in any comprehensive and inclusive way, one must dwell with them and be one of them in outward sentiment and sympathy. There is no other way by which a clear insight into their domestic living can be acquired. The freedmen, like all submerged classes, have an exterior and an interior code of conduct, and the superficial knowledge of their social life acquired through public contact is altogether misleading and worse than useless as an agency for bettering them. We are therefore led to believe, by reason of the current misapprehension concerning the freed people, that every essential fact of negro life and living should without evasion or concealment be brought to light. We also trust that this brief recital of racial shortcomings may not only induce an awakening, but will enable those charged with the education of the black people to devise adequate measures for their enlightenment.

Now, to persons reared in an atmosphere of domestic privacy and chaste living, the well-attested facts connected with the actual conditions of negro life may appear incredible statements; but, if so, it will be largely for the reason that the cultured among us have but slight knowledge of the habits, disposition, and social conduct of those inferior to them in point of development. Nor is it possible for our higher classes, with their formal methods and masterful ways, to acquire an accurate insight into the actual life and living of those beneath them, since visible



contempt on the one side and resentful distrust on the other effectually block the way to any mutual understanding. In this explanation lies the key to the usual inconclusive results achieved by reformatory agencies. In what is attempted there is rarely any honest effort to get at the core of the matter by ascertaining, with precision, the instincts, impulses, and aspirations of the people whom we undertake to serve. Humanitarian efforts for the amelioration of mankind are, therefore, often futile. Nor does the matter end there, for philanthropy becomes discouraged and ceases to interest itself in human betterment while those of inferior social attainments cling with greater obstinacy to environing conditions. In most cases such results might be averted if a clearer understanding of actual conditions were acquired before attempts at social uplifting were begun.

No one will deny that our freed people occupy an anomalous and unique relation to American society; consequently, in any serious study of this subject, the question which naturally arises is, What are the chief besetments which hinder negro recognition, as an equal member of our social fraternity? There are four characteristic phases which we shall note, as having a pronounced bearing on his exclusion from well-ordered social intercourse. He is regarded as a creature of lascivious habits, personal vanity, mental density, and physical laziness. All who know the negro recognize, however, that the chief and overpowering element in his make-up is an imperious

sexual impulse, which, aroused at the slightest incentive, sweeps aside all restraints in the pursuit of physical gratification. We may say now that this element of negro character constitutes the main incitement to the degeneracy of the race, and is the chief hindrance to its social uplifting.

We have elsewhere referred to the cleavage between high and low degrees of social development. In well-ordered homes, the conduct of the members, male and female, is environed with certain reservations, and their personal intercourse is governed by a self-respecting courtesy that neither invades individual privacy nor invites wanton liberties. In negro homes, on the contrary, their inmates, devoid of either modesty or discretion, indulge in the utmost freedom of speech and action, and the female members, regardless of the presence of their male relatives and friends, go about in scanty clothing which invites a familiar caress that is rarely forbidden or resented as an insult. Not only does the semi-nude attire of the adult negresses invite lascivious carousal at home, but their young daughters are permitted to parade the streets and visit their associates clad in a scantiness of attire that ought never to be seen outside a bedroom. With a knowledge of these facts, it will not require a very keen discernment to discover that negroes have not learned the elementary principles of moral conduct, nor acquired sobriety of speech, nor delicacy of manner in daily intercourse, and domestic seclusion.

But what else could be expected of a people, among whom vulgarisms of speech are staple topics of conversation, where obscene allusions are listened to with avidious relish by the young and old of both sexes, and where there is such moral laxity among all classes as to transcend every semblance of decency? It is fair to say, however, that much of the temptation and wrong-doing which beset the freedmen arises from the fact that negroes are preëminently social in their instincts. To be sure, their illiterate loquacity is fatal to enduring friendship; but, as their puerile gossip chiefly concerns each other's dress, color, hair, male and female associates, and domestic living, it seldom fomented enduring discord among themselves, though not infrequently their craze for social excitement involves them in serious crimes.

To understand intelligently the subject, we must realize that the great mass of the negro people are implacably arrayed against social distinctions, and seek to reduce all higher grades of race living to its own debasing level. Hence, the most heinous infringement of the moral law is no bar to social recognition among a people where individual intercourse is regulated by personal likes or dislikes. So triumphantly intrenched are they in insuperable vanity, and so surrounded by a rampart of ceaseless indiscretions, that it is no rare thing to see prostitution lock arms with chastity, and cultured libertinism outrank illiterate purity in their most notable social gatherings. We shall be grossly deceived, however,



if we conclude that the negro has no code of morality. He has, and one that in many respects is rigorously enforced. For instance, the negro's ethical code sternly reprobates dancing, theatre attendance, and all social games of chance. It does not, however, forbid lying, rum-drinking, or stealing. Furthermore, a man may trail his loathsome form into the sanctity of private homes, seduce a wife, sister, or daughter with impunity, and be the father of a score of illegitimate children by as many mothers, and yet be a disciple of holiness and honored with public confidence. So bestial are negro men that we have known them to lead wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters to the sensuous embraces of white men as readily as it is said the Irish peasants led their virgin daughters to the arms of their English conquerors during the early conquest of that country.

So lacking in moral rectitude are the men of the negro race that we have known them to take strange women into their homes and cohabit with them with the knowledge, but without protest, from their wives and children. So great is their moral putridity that it is no uncommon thing for stepfathers to have children by their step-daughters with the consent of the wife and mother of the girl. Nor do other ties of relationship interpose moral barriers, for fathers and daughters, brothers and sisters, oblivious of decent social restrictions, abandon themselves without attempt at self-restraint to sexual gratification whenever desire and opportunity arises. That such

licentiousness is prevalent is not surprising, when we reflect that animal impulse is the sole master, to which both sexes yield unquestioned obedience. Not only is negro immorality without shame, remorse, or contrition, but their unchaste men and women are perfidious, malevolent, and cowardly in their relations, and with reckless obliviousness to consequences eagerly gloat over each other's frailties and readily betray the indiscretions of their companions in guilt. Moreover, the contradictions of the freedman's nature are such that, while imputations of personal impurity are resented by the known impure, there is a common disposition to question each other's morals, and rarely is either male or female accorded a clean bill of approval. Soberly speaking, negro nature is so craven and sensuous in every fibre of its being that a negro manhood with decent respect for chaste womanhood does not exist.

These conclusions are reached because the facts show that the negro is slowly and steadily undergoing moral deterioration; not, however, because he cannot keep pace with the advancing strides of an environing superior civilization, but because he has no ethical integrity, no inbred determination for right-doing, and consequently no clearly defined and steadfast aversion to wrong-doing. The American negro never had a conscientious and intelligent appreciation of the law of obedience, and for that reason either does not clearly apprehend, or else wantonly ignores, essential facts. In any critical analysis of this sub-

ject, we shall easily discover that the groundwork of negro degeneration rests on mental frivolity and physical pleasure, and that, owing to these characteristic traits, his confusion of mind is such that he fails to realize that between good and evil conduct there is a great gulf. He has yet to discern that there is such a thing as moral inexorableness, with every sin shadowed by its own penalty. The simple truth is that there is going on, side by side in the negro people, a minimum progress with a maximum regress ; or, in other words, an awakening of a minority of them, with an increasing degradation of the majority.

One of the most reprehensible features leading to the ruin of negro men is their foolish imitations of the vices of the whites. For instance, negro attendants in hotels frequently wait on prominent white men who have resorted thither for carousal with lewd female companions. The example thus set they readily follow, and speedily make a business of what white men do for pastime. When rebuked for their folly they set up the excuse that they are no worse than their superiors in vicious indulgence. Likely enough this is true ; nevertheless, not only do white men come out of their debaucheries in a better condition than their imitators, but it is also true that, so long as the latter do not realize their moral degradation, moral betterment is impossible. Moreover, as long as the negro is heedless as to act and thoughtless as to consequences, his disposition to imitate white folly will be the source of much evil-



doing within the race. It may be, however, that the negro cannot acquire an inflexible determination for the realities of right living. While he can state with absolute precision the distinction between right and wrong, and is outspoken in condemnation of the immoralities of others, we find no evidence of the existence of moral aversion to wrong-doing within himself. Furthermore, the negro's attitude toward personal wrong-doing is always childish, and in many respects borders on imbecility; for, when actual misdeeds are brought home to him in a way that admits of no denial, instead of confessing his guilt and attempting its eradication, he merely seeks condonation and justification by pointing to the evil-doings of other people. But what, we ask, has the negro to do with the crimes of the white man, and in what respect can white heinousness efface negro guilt? Cannot the freedman realize that he alone is responsible for his own act?—that his crimes are to be considered and treated as if they were the only misdeeds in the universe, and he the only criminal? One thing is certain, his infamy will never be blotted out by contrast.

But, while the negro is thoroughly imbruted with lascivious instincts, there are many contributory causes which accelerate libidinous acts. For instance, the practice of masturbation is common among the children of both sexes, and the physical desire awakened and stimulated by organic manipulation inevitably leads to sexual intercourse. It is, there-

fore, almost impossible to find a person of either sex, over fifteen years of age, who has not had actual carnal knowledge. But not only do the young negro girls who grow up in idleness become prematurely old in viciousness, but even those better reared are amazingly yielding to licentious overtures, especially if a proposed meeting-place is sufficiently secluded to render detection improbable. For although abashed by discovery and chagrined by publicity, such girls are not easily deterred from following their inclinations, inasmuch as the greatest immoralities rarely disturb their social status or exclude them from church associations. Innate modesty is not a characteristic of the American negro women. On the contrary, there is observable among them a willing susceptibility to the blandishments of licentious men, together with a widespread distribution of physical favors among their male friends. The great majority of them, to be sure, are not bold and avaricious like the abandoned women of other races, though they are becoming that, especially in the North. Nevertheless, the grossly depraved among them exhibit considerable animal affection, and readily yield to caresses that consciously lead them to destruction.

Marriage is no barrier to illicit sexual indulgence, and both men and women maintain such relations in utter disregard of their plighted troth. In fact, so deeply rooted in immorality are our negro people that they turn in aversion from any sexual relation which does not invite sensuous embraces, and seize with

feverish avidity upon every opportunity that promises personal gratification. Women unresistingly betray their wifely honor to satisfy a bestial instinct, and though there may be times when a morbid sentimental remorse reminds them for a brief period of their folly, yet every notion of marital duty and fidelity is cast to the winds when the next moment of passion arrives.

Most negro women marry young; when they do not their spinsterhood is due either to physical disease, or sexual morbidity, or a desire for unrestrained sexual freedom. But, even in the latter case, there are but few freedwomen who do not have particular male friends, to whom they are more or less constant. Negro women, however, have but dim notions of the nature and obligations of wifehood; for, as we have observed, the leading thoughts which actuate them are to be free from parental control, to secure idle maintenance, and to indulge in unbridled sexual freedom. Nor is female ante-nuptial knowledge a bar to marriage among negroes, especially in the alliance of a fair woman to a black man, while illegitimate motherhood is rather a recommendation in the eyes of a prospective husband.

Marital immoralities, however, are not confined to the poor, the ignorant, and the degraded among the freed people, but are equally common among those who presume to be educated and refined. We have personal knowledge of more than a score of negro preachers of high repute who are married to women of known impurity, and of whose immorality they



were fully cognizant before marriage. In more than one instance we have heard such a preacher privately denounce a woman publicly known as the mistress of white men, and afterward found that that particular woman had become the wife of that identical preacher and a leader in negro society. We have convincing proof that many negro ministers owe their prominence in pastoral appointment to the fact that their wives have prostituted themselves with their official superiors. We know of others who have been thrust into conspicuous churches for no other reason than because they had knowledge of, or were purveyors for, the licentious instincts of their clerical superiors. But while a large majority of our negro ministry is conspicuous for its licentious indulgence with female members of negro churches, there are not wanting instances where church debts have been created, and schemes concocted for procuring money from philanthropic white people, in order that a black preacher might have means to win the favor of white women of lewd morals.

All of the negro schools in the South are not moral sanctuaries, and it is but in keeping with well-known facts to say that many of those in authority, who were intrusted to guide into paths of truth and righteousness the humble beings committed to their charge, have wantonly betrayed their trust. This has been notably true of the schools in charge of the black people themselves, though there are others that equally deserve censure. We have knowledge of

many unmentionable features incident to the educational work among the freedmen that have greatly hampered the inculcation of sound moral distinctions, but such is the cravenness of white and black institutional poverty that it has not dared to exact from its attendants genuine moral sobriety. The consequence is that there is no school of prominence in negro training which has not had among its pupils young freedwomen sustaining immoral relations with white men, whose school expenses have been, in many instances, defrayed by such persons with the knowledge and consent of the school authorities. \* It is also a significant and suggestive fact, that it is always the good-looking, light-colored girl who is favored, both as a student and as an applicant for a position in the public schools. But however regrettable these things may be, it is needful to know that, for causes which need not be specified, the complex conditions of the Southern social system have from the beginning exercised a pernicious influence on the educational work among the freedmen.

Vice, never wanting in emissaries, is propagated among the freedmen in many ways. One is the habit they have of betaking themselves to the villages on Saturdays, where their wives and daughters, congregated around the stores and other public places, are the subjects of obscene speech and the victims of immoral advances. The railroad excursions, so extensively indulged in by the negro preachers of the South for the benefit of their churches, are an-

other prolific cause of immorality, and many young girls are brought to grief and ruin by them. Nor is it surprising that such should be the case, when hundreds of them, allured by the cheap rates, will crowd the cars and travel long distances, only to find themselves in a strange city, where, without means or friends, they are compelled to spend a night as best they can. Negro religionists have much to answer for in the way of commission as well as omission; but their culpability becomes specially heinous when abandoned courtesans can directly trace their downfall to a religious picnic and a clerical seducer. Another incentive to negro degradation is that nondescript order of social clubs in which every city abounds; for, while these social rendezvous are ostensibly of a literary nature, they are in reality devoted to gambling, drinking, and dancing. Their most conspicuous attractions, however, are young women dressed *décolleté*, who are under the impression that they are like white society when permitting their nude charms to be openly caressed at the pleasure of their male companions. Knowledge of social decorum among these young women has been mainly derived from questionable novels and salacious theatricals. Besides, in the North their real or affected prudery would put them at a serious disadvantage in competing for the favor of their male companions, owing to the fact that lewd white women resort to such places and become the coveted prizes of the most desirable negro men.



A despicable source of moral corruption is that class of negro men infesting all of our large cities who never engage in honest work, but eke out a precarious existence by their wits. These men are the systematic corrupters of black womanhood, their chosen prey being those employed in domestic service. On these girls they levy a species of blackmail for idle maintenance, though none escape their licentious overtures. There are also negro men and women, of good repute in their churches in the North, who make periodical visits to the South for the purpose of procuring handsome-looking negro girls for infamous purposes. They are ostensibly engaged for domestic service, but in reality to be consigned to the lowest dens of infamy. No large city in the North is free from this degrading traffic, because there are but few of these religious "saints," who will not sell the chastity of any young girl for a moderate sum of money. There are other negro men and women, of good social standing in their own race, who make a business of providing furnished rooms for the transient cohabitation of men and women, and live in comparative affluence on their ill-gotten gains. But, notwithstanding their universal licentiousness, the negro women as a whole are superior in many respects to negro men. The force of this conclusion rests on the fact that in all of our cities, North and South, there is a large class of freedwomen who, by their unaided efforts, pay their house rent and feed and clothe their children, while

their dissolute husbands roam about in wanton idleness. The latter are usually great braggarts but arrant cowards, and decidedly inferior to their slave forbears in every semblance of manhood.

Negro social conditions will, however, be but dimly understood, even in their more conspicuous phases, unless we are prepared to realize at every step in our investigation that physical excitation is the chief and foremost craving of the freedman's nature. We see evidence of this in his manner of eating, drinking, and indulgence in social pleasures, from which we may gather some notion of the boundless obstacles which stand in the way of his immediate or remote regeneration. It is as much a quest for physical excitement as the promise of pecuniary gain which impels the negro to indulge in petty gambling and makes him the chief "policy-player" of the community, in every city, North and South. So deeply rooted is this impulse, that both "saints and sinners," the leaders and the led of the negro men and women, constantly haunt such gambling-places, and, notwithstanding arrest, imprisonment, and disgrace are not rare incidents in their experience, they continue to be the most persistent supporters of "policy" promoters. It is chiefly a desire for physical sensation which causes snuff-dipping to be such a prevalent custom among black people. Even the children at their mothers' breasts are taught to use it; and the bleared eyes and blotched cheeks of men and women sodden with the use of tobacco betokens

but too well to what excess they have gone in the use of loathsome narcotics. For like reasons rum-drinking is also universal among both sexes; and all grades of negro society, preachers and laity seem to vie with each other in the use of intoxicating liquors. So excessive is their indulgence in these two vices that it has been reliably estimated that the freedmen spend over sixty millions of dollars annually for rum and tobacco.

A deplorable fact to be noted is that, while venereal diseases, especially those of a syphilitic nature, were almost unknown among the negroes during slavery, since their freedom these diseases have overspread the entire South. This is specially true of syphilis; and while it rarely assumes the malignant form so often exhibited in cold climates, owing to its peculiar amenability to tropical and subtropical temperatures, yet so deep-seated is it among the negroes that it threatens to baffle the skill of the medical profession. So firmly rooted are these venereal diseases among the freed people of the cities that many persons, especially women, are unconscious of the nature of their ailments, and, when chance apprises them of their misfortune, false notions of modesty or innate cowardice leads them to seek relief through quack medicines rather than through the advice and treatment of capable physicians. These physical disorders are extending to the plantation negroes, and are largely brought about through rural freedwomen, who have been permitted to



indulge briefly in the allurements of city life, to whose attractions they have readily yielded. On return to their country homes they become the ignorant disseminators of loathsome diseases.

Our statements concerning the immoral tendencies of the freed people may shock the sensibilities of those persons who are ignorant of their physical inclinations. It is altogether likely that they will wound the vanity of the race inculcated. Nevertheless, the certainty of our conclusions is as demonstrable as any problem of Euclid. We shall, however, cite some facts which will go toward substantiating our conclusions. For example, a noted teacher in a Southern negro school, who has charge of several hundred children, ranging in age from six to fifteen, has informed us that it was well-nigh impossible to keep the boys and girls from indulging in immoral practices even while together in the schoolyard, and that several instances of carnal contact had taken place despite the presence of numerous onlooking companions. This is not an exceptional experience. Co-sexual assemblages of negroes, whether of children or adults, in the schoolroom or sanctuary, would, if the light were turned on, disclose an equal degree of moral turpitude. We have also been informed by a trustworthy physician, who has had an exceptionally large female practice, that he had professionally examined over nine hundred negro girls ranging in age from ten to twenty-five years, and that, out of that number, only two furnished proofs of virginity,

while most of the others exhibited indisputable evidence of unchastity. He further stated that he found the greatest manifestation of sexual desire in those girls who were under twenty years of age.

We anticipate that these statements may be controverted, and the averment made that evidence of female immorality is lacking where its usual fruitage is invisible. Such an objection is groundless, for, while wifeless maternity is decreasing among negroes, ante-nuptial infanticide is increasing at an alarming rate. Besides, the fact is not to be overlooked that early sexual indulgence precipitates an internal derangement of the physical organs which renders conception difficult, if not improbable. When it does take place, however, the young negro woman is not without adequate resources, for in the South the fields around her cabin supply her with a potent remedy of whose peculiar efficacy she is fully aware. Then, again, in the cities and towns of either section she can and does have recourse to criminal operations with the knowledge and approval of her parents. Criminal malpractice is not rare, as all well-informed people know. For example, we have in mind a prominent white physician residing in a leading Southern city, who has in a confidential way privately acknowledged to having been instrumental in effecting over two hundred abortions among young negro women at the instance of their white paramours. This is not an exceptional medical experience, but one that can be duplicated in every

Southern city, and in not a few of those of the North. So widespreading is this disorder that, if not arrested, American negro women are likely to become as infertile as the Greek courtesans, and it is needless to say that the people of any race is doomed to extinction when the women cease to become mothers.

This reference to criminal operations for the destruction of sexual fruitage calls up another phase of social conditions that cannot be ignored in any attempted uplifting of the race. We refer to the well-nigh universal custom in the South, as well as in many sections of the North, of white men keeping negro mistresses. This shameless prostitution of an inferior people by the men of a superior race offers the most forcible obstacle to be encountered in any effort for the moral regeneration of the freed people. Not only are the inherent lascivious instincts of the race to be met and overcome, but the subtle and powerful machinations of an adroit libertinism, interested in perpetuating negro degradation, must be courageously reckoned with. That such grave social complications exist is well attested by the fact that Southern grand juries, composed of reputable white citizens have been outspoken in their condemnation of the prevalent negro concubinage of their section, and their presentments to the courts of their vicinage have repeatedly affirmed that their young white men are not marrying, and would not marry, their social peers, so long as they were permitted to keep negro mistresses. The causes



which have brought about this anomalous social phase are not far to seek. They will be found in the lax morality, the love of luxury, and that material greed which so largely permeates our civilization, and which are doing for us what the same influences wrought in the French people, — that is, producing a class of voluptuous white celibates, who will not create conjugal homes and rear legitimate families, because they have greater freedom and less expense in a misalliance with an inferior and subjective female class. We may, to be sure, blindly ignore existing facts, and be oblivious to the drift of events, but any sane forecast of the future will reveal impending evils of prodigious magnitude to a people who are neither “marrying nor given in marriage.”

There may be a disposition by well-intentioned persons who have more or less knowledge of this matter to question the facts underlying our statements concerning negro social conditions. If so, they are advised in advance that no conclusive evidence to the contrary exists; furthermore, to all who are disposed to challenge the veracity of these statements, we suggest a simple method by which they may reasonably ascertain for themselves the correctness of what we say. For example, let those interested in this subject make out, from among their immediate acquaintances, a random list of one hundred female negroes; then scan the list critically, and we venture the assertion that they will be amazed

and mortified at the number of moral lapses which a mere inspection of the list will disclose. Of course an adequate and authoritative comprehension of this question can only be reached in this, as in other departments of knowledge, from facts, from analytical investigation and verified data. We shall, however, in view of all the known facts at our command, be justified in assuming that not only are fully ninety per cent of the negro women of America lascivious by instinct and in bondage to physical pleasure, but that the social degradation of our freed-women is without a parallel in modern civilization.

In advancing this conclusion we shall briefly note, in addition to what has already been said in this connection, that the leading causes which have wrought their downfall and which perpetuate their shame, are an aversion for manual labor, the desire for physical ease, a craving for gaudy display in dress, the lack of conception or knowledge of the fundamental duties, obligations, and social requirements of womankind, and the consciousness of white superiority and negro debasement. These incitements to personal degradation are supplemented and overshadowed by the racial distinctions instilled in the minds of negro girls by many mothers, who not only bring them up in an atmosphere of lax morality, but in many instances with positive aversion to their own race and color, thereby effecting their early transition from purity to concubinage. While these social statements fairly indicate the status and trend

of negro development, the question arises again, Is it instinct, impulse, or will, or all of them combined, which leads the negro to prefer darkness to light, vice to virtue, crime to innocence, death to life? To our mind the answer lies in a sentence,—it is an insatiate craving for physical sensations, an impulse that constitutes the supreme motif of negroid activity. In order to apprehend the significance of this statement in all its bearings, there is need to realize that the psychical endowment of the negro has not developed adequate mental and spiritual forces. He is lacking in continuity of purpose, in abstract endeavor, and seeks satisfaction in such concrete sensations as taste and feeling.

It was not deemed necessary to the verification of our statements that special incidents should be related in detail, either as to person or act. Such disclosures could serve no useful end; besides, the characteristic data of which we have made use is everywhere present in the negro people, and readily accessible to the observant public. It is hardly necessary to add that these animadversions of negro shortcomings are not indulged in for the sake of denunciation. Wherefore, then, it may be questioned, are these revelations, this exhibit of frailty, this analysis of weakness? For this: to arouse moral apathy into earnest discontent, to protest against bigotry, to stimulate uprising against ignorance, to revolt against infamy,—to the end that hoary mendacities, sacerdotal hypocrisies, the ghastly corpses of servile



mummeries, and all other duplicities which shackle the conscience and blur the vision of enthralled souls shall be tossed aside and trampled under foot, and that the dross be utterly consumed in the indignation of reclaimed men and women.

The moral status of a race is fixed by the character of its women ; but, as moral rectitude is not a predominant trait in negro nature, female chastity is not one of its endowments. Nor has negro womankind any strong incentive for virtuous living when the pure and the impure are received on an equal footing in social intercourse, and the ability to wear good clothes is the sole criterion of individual social standing. The manifest disposition of the negro people to blot out all moral distinctions in social intercourse has had its inevitable fruits. The women of that race are evading honest toil to live in licentious ease. Moreover, as fine clothes are the open sesame to social recognition, a craze for dress and personal adornment has aroused within the freedmen a passionate discontent that urges them to resort to all sorts of reprehensible follies, and even crime, to obtain their desire. This greed and unrest among their women, which would be laudable if it led them to honest labor and thrifty forethought, is a strong incitement to immoral vices, — so much so that, without remorse or shame, for the sake of obtaining luxuries without labor, they will traffic in their bodies, which is the most marketable commodity they possess.

So visibly universal is the strife for personal adorn-

ment that negro mothers cannot be held blameless for the immoralities of their daughters, and there is at least ground for believing that sexual impurity is deliberately inculcated in them, since, in many instances, their maternal guardians appear to be never so pleased as when the physical charms of their daughters have procured for them dress and jewels beyond the ability of their parents to provide. Nor do the girls themselves appear to be abashed by any publicity of their immoralities. On the contrary, they are conspicuous in the social gatherings of their people, and parade with shameless audacity their wanton finery before their envious and less successful female friends. These facts would be incredible did we not realize that negro women are admittedly weak in purpose, timid in execution, superstitious in thought, lascivious in conduct, and signally lacking in those enduring qualities which make for morality, thrift, and industry. Therefore, as they are seldom animated by high aspirations and noble purposes, the common-sense lessons of life which universal experience teaches are rarely heeded by them.

So far as we can discern, negro motherhood is not animated with profound convictions of truth and duty. The freedwomen evidently do not realize that they are the custodians of the souls as well as the bodies of their children, and the first and chief teachers in life of purity in speech and action, of right-doing in all its phases, and the God-ordained

creators of true manhood and womanhood. On the contrary, they bring to the discharge of their domestic duties illiterate minds, unskilled hands, impetuous tempers, untidy deportment, and shiftless methods. Moreover, as their chief defects are ignorance and laziness, filth and squalor, these advance agents of intemperance and vice pervade and dominate their domestic endeavors, and such conditions are increasingly perpetuated as the negro children come into being. Where such conditions exist it is obvious that any uplifting movement begun for the race must attack every point of life and character requiring amendment or improvement; though, first and foremost, let us realize that it is example and environment which make for the good or ill of mankind. We see that vice propagates vice, that wholesome surroundings induce virtuous living, and nothing more strongly exemplifies this fact, either in the direction of upward or downward growth, than the law of habit. Obviously we build solid characters of truth and righteousness mainly through pure association and the steady repetition of good deeds. On the other hand, evil contact and vicious example as certainly lead to vice and infamy. We shall therefore make no mistake in saying that, until an all-pervading desire for cleanliness, sobriety, industry, and chastity awakens within the freed-women and arouses them to reformatory action, no amount of theoretical knowledge will be of the slightest value to them, solely because knowledge



is valuable only in proportion as it is applied to the actual needs of life.

These observations lead us to note that, whether considered as units of contrasts or as inclusive aggregates of type characteristics, there is a fundamental difference in the racial character, habits, integrity, courage, and strength of negro and white Americans. What makes it? The answer lies in one word—their women. But while that fact is obvious, it furnishes no solution of another equally patent, which is this: Girls of the two races will grow up side by side, attend the same schools, go through the same course of study, and enjoy equal mental advantages, yet the chances are two to one that the negro girl at twenty will be a giggling idiot and lascivious wreck, while her white companion in school and church, of the same age, has blossomed out into chaste womanhood, intelligent in mind and accomplished in manner. This difference between them becomes of fundamental significance when we reflect that each girl represents the future maternal life-blood of her respective people, and that the wives and mothers of a race are its earliest and most convincing teachers. How important, then, that negro women should comprehend and uphold, under all circumstances and in all places, the purity, dignity, and worth of chaste living. Is it not obvious that the negro people will never become great, wise, or true, until its women become the qualified teachers of infant life and the moral censors of mature exist-

ence, until they institute such safeguards and assurances of chaste maidenhood as characterize Hebrew social life?

So far as the questions of marriage and divorce relate to the freedman we are confronted by conditions that no amount of common-sense pleading will eliminate. Marriage rites are held by negroes to effect a mystical union between two persons of opposite sex, in much the same sense that regeneration is understood to operate upon their spiritual natures. That is to say, no matter how divergent in character, sentiment, habit, or inclination, two persons may be, they are by some supernatural process made one through a ceremonial incantation uttered by clerical lips. Ceremonial marriage, therefore, with the negroes, is invested with a superstitious halo, notwithstanding the fact that the nature, purpose, duties, and obligations of marital relations are unknown to most of those contracting connubial ties, and when known to them are frequently unheeded. In the presence of such beliefs it would be a waste of time and words to say that true marriage is a complete union of the aims, ideals, purposes, and interests of two persons, of such consummate oneness as to shut out all variant individual interests and compel personal selfishness to give way to dual welfare; that actual marriage is neither mercenary nor sensuous, but replete with sacrifice and service, with a constant preference of another for self, and that when these do not exist the essentials of wedded life are wanting.

Concurrent with the freedman's notion concerning marriage there is a disposition among many of the leading negro societies to discredit the legitimate function of divorce, some of which have even gone so far as to usurp functions belonging to the state by not only undertaking to regulate marriage among their followers, but to pass in review the mandates of the state and impeach the legality of its acts. The consequence is that, should a man or woman of these societies when mated with an impure companion procure a severance of marital ties through divorce, and to live a decent life thereafter marry another, he or she is liable to be adjudged guilty of bigamy. The negro conjugal maxim is, once married always married; to which doubtless he has been led by his creed, which is, once in Christ always in Christ. In each condition, however, he is sadly derelict in conjoining practice with belief, and chiefly because he is more concerned with the form than with the facts of morality. The religious negro often expresses an abhorrence of divorces, while he freely indulges in conjugal separation, and exhibits a decided preference for sexual alliances free from legal restraint.

For ourselves, we believe in maintaining, wherever it is possible, the integrity of marriage, the purity of home, the fidelity of husband and wife to all the duties and requirements imposed by marital obligations. But we as firmly believe, when these duties are disregarded, when family honor is imperilled and home life desecrated with nuptial infidelity,



that the legitimate and honorable step for self-respect and conscious rectitude to take is immediate separation and divorce. Marriage, as all intelligent people know, is a civil compact, consummated by two individuals of opposite sex, under such limitations and restrictions as the civic organism has made and provided. It is a civil contract between persons capable of making a legal agreement; the sanction of the state is necessary to its validity; it is annulable for cause through judicial process. Hence a decree for divorce from a court having jurisdiction is *prima facie* evidence of the annulment of the previously contracted marriage, and, unless it can be clearly established before a competent judicial tribunal that such decree was obtained through collusion and fraud, it will not be set aside. These are facts of which it appears the negro is wilfully ignorant, or to which he opposes obstinate indifference.

The question naturally arises, What can be done to ameliorate the condition of these negro people? We have but one solution to offer, and that is an amenable family supervision of such a character as will impart to its old and young useful knowledge of immediate needs, and induce one and all to strive for sincere social betterment. As we see this question, the one supreme need of negro family life is regenerated fathers and mothers and wholesome living. Evidently, then, as long as these are lacking the moral and social redemption of badly reared, poorly nurtured, and viciously environed boys and girls is

impossible, unless the reformatory discipline to which they are subjected extends to their homes and includes their parents. The value of this suggestion lies in the fact that any adequate family supervision would awaken in parents a desire for social betterment, and open the way for a sympathetic development of their children. Moreover, as there is a perceptible awakening to the evils of immoral degradation among negroes themselves, it is reasonable to believe that the more self-respecting freedmen would welcome corrective oversight, and be fairly amenable to any agency which, in a helpful spirit, undertook to improve their social condition. As matters now stand, they cannot effect their own extrication.

But such lessons in living as the negro needs cannot be imparted through any process of mental abstraction. Memorized precepts will not leaven sinful humanity with truth and righteousness; neither will verbal gymnastics bring about moral transformation. What the negro stands in absolute need of is such a renovating education as will implant within his untutored nature high ideals of sound sentiments respecting manhood and womanhood, and, at the same time, will train his mind, enlighten his soul, and discipline his body in every essential function of wholesome living. Already something has been accomplished in this direction, and both the flower and fruitage of racial evolution may be seen in that class of men and women among the freedmen who are honestly striving to free themselves from immoral entangle-

ment. Nevertheless, it is obviously impossible for a fraction of regenerated negroes, with neither faith nor force behind them,—not to mention a lack of other essential endowments,—to change the habits and ideals of those from whom they have emerged, and who, in consequence, are bound to regard them as not a whit better than themselves.

The duty of all serious promoters of negro enlightenment is to apply to racial viciousness such correctives as the soundest experience has demonstrated to be the most efficacious in promoting the social bettering of mankind. Present methods will not regenerate the negro race; neither sobriety nor stability is ever attained by a homeless people. The negro needs to be taught how to create and maintain a home in honor and purity, and to that end he requires the influence of wholesome example and the inspiration of supervising contact. But no substantial moral elevation of the negro is possible without the intervention and coöperation of highly qualified women, such as are thoroughly capable, painstaking, and God-fearing teachers of truth and righteousness. This is a common-sense suggestion, and it is in line with conditions of aid which now exist. Negroes are accustomed to industrial control, and have been for centuries in abject submission to the white people of the South, who know, as no others can, all their good and bad qualities. We are therefore constrained to believe that, were the best representatives of Southern white civilization to lay aside their



exclusive race arrogance, there is little doubt but that prodigious results would follow any candid and serious purpose on their part to accomplish the freedman's regeneration.

It ought, moreover, to be said that this duty is fairly incumbent upon those who have so interminably dominated an inferior race, and with whom, through vicious sexual alliance, they have become inextricably entangled in blood, lineage, speech, and habits. Candidly speaking, the white people of the South owe it to our civilization and Christianity, as well as to themselves and their posterity, to purify, by chaste speech and wholesome example, the homes of the blacks whom they and their ancestors have so wantonly debauched. It is no less a matter of moral preservation than their imperative duty, to arrest the degeneracy of that race with whom their future is inseparably bound up. But, whether or not this work is taken up by the white men and women of the South, the fetidness of negro sensuality must be eradicated. It can only be done, however, through an army of good and true women; and as no sufficient number of such women are to be found within the race itself, they must be sought from without. Where can such divinely consecrated teachers and exemplars of righteousness as this work requires be found? The only feasible hope for such a consummation centres in such white women of the North as may be aroused to a sense of the needs and wants of a degraded black sisterhood, and who, by going to its relief, shall train

the young negro women into abhorrence for immorality, and lead them to chaste living.

The freedmen require in this, as in other respects, not benevolent pandering nor lordly oversight, but genuine service unstintedly rendered for helpful and wholesome race improvement. To blunder in the face of such opportunities would be criminal, and it would be an unpardonable blunder to exploit any half-hearted measures for the freedman's redemption. The conscience of the negro is imperfectly developed, and he needs constant drill in moral endeavor, under such guidance and surrounded by such influences as will reduce the possibilities of immoral relapse to a minimum. Such training should begin at the cradle. Never, until this is done, shall we succeed in inculcating in this people such ideals as will develop characters grounded on integrity and consecrated to service and duty. Despite their vanity, sensuous follies, and instability of temperament, our freed men and women have within them an unfathomed wealth of sentiment, which only awaits the deft hand of moral tactfulness to be moulded into serious and steady response to the demands of life.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CRIMINAL INSTINCTS

EVERY social organism is founded on laws defining right and wrong. But, apart from any legal definition, a sense of right and wrong is grounded in the human understanding. Crimes are offences prohibited by municipal law. Crime is a menace to social order, an infringement upon individual rights, an assault on private property. Criminals are the open and avowed enemies of mankind, against whom society has a right to protect itself in every possible way. The crime instinct has its source in moral obtuseness and physical desire, and the criminal class may be divided into the congenital, the habitual, and the spasmodic, according to the proclivities evinced in each particular person.

The extent of the crime instinct in the negro is indeterminate for the reason that accurate data are unattainable. In so far as he has been held to an outward observance of moral restraints, it is obvious that fear of bodily harm has been the chief influence which has kept him in check. That his nature is surcharged with latent ferocity is shown by abundant evidence of atrociousness, committed on weak and



defenceless objects. Indeed, there is good ground for believing that, were the negro once convincingly assured of personal security, all the malignity of his slumbering savagery would immediately find expression in the most revolting acts of physical lawlessness. His passions are easily excited, and his feelings readily inflamed to the point of reckless vindictiveness, though a natural unsteadiness of character renders him fickle and unstable in purpose.

For the commission of crime requiring forethought, coolness, sagacity, and persistency, the negro would be entirely wanting in the requisite courage. He can and does commit offences of horrible atrociousness, but rather as the sequence of impulse than as the outcome of deliberate preparation. At every step in his criminal career he is timid and cowardly, and, whether his victims be human or animal, he is never generous in treatment nor magnanimous in forbearance so long as he occupies the vantage ground. When detected and apprehended, he exhibits all the cravenness of a servile nature by confessing with verbose volubility every harrowing detail of his revolting misdeeds, and the more heinous the crime committed the greater appears his self-heroism. Should he be adjudged guilty and sentenced to undergo capital punishment, he awaits the end with a seeming impatience and a serenity that betokens resignation and submission to a just award, though as a matter of fact his attitude is merely the result of moral obtuseness and apathetic indifference to an impending fate.

A secondary explanation is to be found in the fact that negroes guilty of heinous crimes are taught by their religious teachers that God will pardon them, and that in becoming pardoned all sense of guilt is expunged ; so rapists and murderers sing and shout on the gallows and claim to be regenerated men. Of course, this is sheer nonsense and gross self-deception. There is no real change in men who, if released, would repeat their crimes at the first opportunity. Such teaching is therefore an unconscious or deliberate crime-breeder, and crime flourishes and will continue to flourish among freedmen so long as the doctrine obtains that all evil is condonable, and every infraction of morality a matter of intercession and forgiveness.

The chief expression of negro criminality is directed against property. The negro, being devoid of any sense of responsibility to public opinion, is moved to the commission of criminal acts by impulse and thoughtless disregard of consequences. It is fair to say he does not steal for the sake of stealing, but because he has very little sense of individual ownership, and takes what his appetite suggests or passions crave because it is present to him and within his reach. Theft, therefore, of great or small things, is not a culpable offence in the eyes of freedmen, and the black thief is not an object of aversion to them unless the criminal act has been perpetrated against their own persons or belongings, when they are the loudest in denunciation of the crime and the most vociferous in condemnation of the criminal.

Where it is otherwise, the criminal is shielded, and felonious acts committed against the white race are condoned even by the better sort of freedmen, who doggedly affirm that petty peculations of subsistence from the whites are always justified. Is it not merely "spoiling the Egyptians"? So in every negro breast there are inculcated sentiments instigating the purloining of usable property from the dominant race; and where food or clothing belonging to white people is obtainable and wanted by the blacks, it is sure to be appropriated.

This phase of racial turpitude will be better comprehended when it is realized that the negro's rational faculties have not been awakened through his more recent acquaintance with books, just as his ethical acquirements have not imposed restraints upon his physical impulses. He has but a slight sense of amenability to social rectitude, and the criminal classes of his race do not have that feeling of shame, and sense of degradation, which is usually found among all convicted persons except those of the most hardened class of white criminals. But we shall do well to bear in mind that negro criminality is not primarily instigated by any sordid desire for material possession. In most instances it is precipitated by a craving for sensations. The crime is means to an end.

The negro who steals his neighbor's chickens, for example, does not rob him of his property out of ill will; there is neither malice, retaliation, nor revenge involved in the act, and the poultry thief will purloin



as readily from his relatives and friends as from an entire stranger. The sole animus of this theft is simply a covetous impulse to satisfy gustatory appetite. Physical desire is so ingrained in his nature that those of all degrees of social development will gratify their propensity by petty thieving. The preacher in charge of the moral training of his people, and the teacher engaged in their mental instruction, will steal from each other and from the whites as readily as the most indigent freedman. By filchings the orchard is robbed of its choicest fruits, the garden despoiled of its luscious products, the hennery stripped of fowls, and the sty of pigs, to satisfy the rapacious gluttony of racial indolence.

But while the primary impulse of the negro to steal is derived from his appetites, nevertheless, as he grows in intelligence and wants, the area of motives that induce theft enlarges. The ignorant negro steals food to eat and a garment to wear; the more intelligent steals cotton from the gin-houses, corn from the crib, hogs from the pens, cattle from the field, or horses from the stable, and offers his theft for sale or barter in localities where it cannot be identified. Should his first attempt at crime succeed, he is launched on a career that is eventually steeped in wickedness and terminates only in death. We have just remarked that the area of criminality is enlarging. That is always a foreseen result in any class entering on a criminal career, and where the transition from minor to major offences is an

inevitable sequent of moral induration. This observation holds true in the case of the criminal freedman, who, to his petty pilferings of food and clothes, now adds burglary, arson, rape, and homicide. It is significant that arson is an increasing crime in the South, and one mainly instigated by a spirit of revenge for real or fancied injuries of a white man against a negro, though it rarely happens that inhabited dwelling-houses are burned. Negro cravenness confines its fiendish vindictiveness to the destruction of the gin-houses, corn-cribs, smoke-houses, and stables of persons who have been unfortunate enough to excite the enmity of their black neighbors.

A generation ago the negro was a comparative stranger to judicial supervision, and when present in court was rarely other than an idle spectator. But when restraints to which he had long been accustomed and to which he yielded passive obedience were removed, and he was left in a condition of license, all the abeyant passions of his undisciplined nature were brought into prominence and antagonism with an environment where reciprocal obligations have not always found their highest expression. The consequence is that negroes who do not yield ready obedience to reason and due regard for the rights and property of others are perpetually embroiled in judicial controversies with one another, when not engaged in defending themselves from accusations brought against them by some despoiled property owner. It may also be of inter-

est to know that the freedwomen are more pugnacious litigants than the men and less amenable to legal corrections. Litigation among negroes is rarely instituted to establish rights or to correct wrongs, but rather to appease malevolent desires and procure revenge for causes of action that among a less emotional people would find adjustment in rational agreement and sober conduct. So ungovernable are negroes in their impulses and desires, and so unceasing are their petty strifes, engendered in a hundred different ways, that their vanity can only be mollified by recourse to the municipal court, with which every paltry complaint is lodged, and where the negro litigant derives his greatest satisfaction in the condemnation of his rival in folly. To confirm these statements we need but call attention to the fact that the grand jury of Montgomery, Alabama, in one of their official presentments, stated that seven-eighths of the complaints brought to their attention and seven-eighths of the court trials were instigated by negro litigants. Nor does this instance represent an anomalous condition of affairs. Grand juries of other counties in Alabama, as well as those of every Southern state, have made substantially the same declaration. Without seeking extenuation for negro foolhardiness, it is just as well to know that there are not wanting white lawyers and justices of inferior courts who encourage strife among negroes merely for the sake of the costs and fees which such legal contentions bring them.



The seriousness of the situation is seen when we state that the freedmen represent seventy-five per cent of the incarcerated criminal class of the South. Moreover, when it is realized that one-third of the crimes committed in the United States and one-third of the convicted criminals are negroes, we are furnished with convincing proof of the criminal degradation that obtains among this people. But while these statements are unimpeachable, we have not the slightest doubt that many negro convicts are really innocent of the crimes for which they have been condemned on the testimony of their own race. This statement should not be discredited when we reflect what sort of creatures many negroes are and by what means they subsist. In all sections where the freedmen are to be found in any considerable number there are among them idle, vicious beings who constitute a group of despicable spies and infamous informers. These persons are readily amenable to flattery or bribery, and a cast-off article of apparel given by a white person will move the garrulous negro to tell all he knows inimical to his race, and where facts are wanting he will fabricate charges that rarely fail to put in jeopardy the lives and liberty of those accused. Where envy and hate play so important a part in their social intercourse, we have substantial grounds for asserting that many a negro who has unwittingly offended some white person has been sent to prison on the evidence of another negro, who, without remorse, has perjured himself for the sake

of discarded raiment or a gratuity of food bestowed by an unprincipled white patron of lust and crime.

Southern criminal jurisprudence has devised various methods of punishment for those who commit crimes, but the most atrocious of them is what is known as the "chain and gang system," for the reason that all classes of offenders, the old and young, male and female, the habitual lawbreaker, and those whom passion, evil associates, or physical wants have unwittingly swept into criminal turpitude, are all herded together and subjected to the same dehumanizing treatment by their irresponsible keepers. The brutal barbarities of this system cannot be adequately depicted. Its shameless pretences, its brazen audacities, its lustful horrors, its school of infamy, its crime-breeding fecundity, appal and outrage every instinct of morality. The condition which makes possible its existence is a damning blot on American civilization. This phase of Southern penal servitude, moreover, has not the slightest excuse or justification for its existence. It was instituted by white cupidity, and, though hedged about with shotguns and Winchester rifles, does not abate crime and is wholly without deterrent features. On the contrary, every brutal passion and debasing instinct is aroused and kept alive in the breast of the victim, who, should his sentence be survived, is irrevocably transformed into an habitual criminal. Such social injustice is infamous. Penal institutions have no right to become purveyors of crime, and American

manhood ought to exterminate the convict lease system in every state, both as it relates to inmates within the penitentiary and to those employed without its walls.

That a criminal instinct of greater or less intensity pervades all submerged classes is not to be controverted, hence, where crime-inspiring conditions confront us, the essential duty is to devise feasible ways and means for their suppression and eradication. In general terms it may be said that, for any comprehensive management of the criminal class of any race, faith and force are the most efficient factors, though, as the negro is largely devoid of intelligent faith, it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to force for keeping him in legal subjection. It is with this end in view that much of that which now follows is set forth. We suggest two ways of treating negro criminals in the South, both of which would exert a salutary effect on the criminal and contribute to the welfare of the community.

Our first suggestion is that convicts should be graded into groups and classified according to age, sex, nature of offence, term of sentence, degree of criminal depravity, and moral obduracy. Those undergoing a life sentence should be confined in a penitentiary and employed in such labor in the institution as would, in providing for their maintenance, effect the least competition with the honest industrial world. Other male convicts undergoing a sentence of five or more years should be set to work on



public highways, and it is conceivable that an elaborate system of road-making might be undertaken that would, in a short time, give the South the best highways in the country. Without doubt good roads would add immensely to the wealth and welfare of the country in which they were built. So far as our knowledge goes, a road tax is now levied in most, if not all, of the states upon their male inhabitants, and where it obtains no innovation would be introduced other than to substitute in the place of crude workmen a corps of trained road-builders such as these convicts would speedily become under the guidance of capable civil engineers.

Our second suggestion is that punishment for minor offences should always be a fine in the shape of a labor commutation, which should be reckoned at a fixed rate for a day's work representing eight hours' labor. One half of the convict's earnings should go to the state in payment of his fine, and the other half to the support of his family if he has one. When he has no one dependent upon him for support, it should be held in reserve and paid to the convict himself on the expiration of his sentence. Our suggestion is that every county in the South should have a convict farm and industrial workhouse, as an adjunct to the state penitentiary, and in each of these institutions the mental, moral, and industrial training of the incarcerated should be carried on by capable and efficient agents of the states thoroughly in sympathy with all feasible efforts for the eradication

of crime and the reformation of the criminal. All negro convicts serving a sentence of less than five years should be committed to state farms in the county where conviction is made, and should there be engaged in crop-raising. The produce in excess of that necessary for their own subsistence and the expense of production would furnish ample subsistence for the other two classes of convicts which we have described, — beside returning under capable management a lucrative reserve fund to the state treasury.

These county farms should not only be made to provide ample resources in the way of subsistence for all the convicts of the state, but as examples of model farms and diversified crop production they should, through their care and culture of grain foods, serve as a highly important object-lesson to surrounding farmers. The state of Texas has some county farms to which minor convicts are sent, but so far as we know they are without reformatory features, and our best impressions are that they represent a very harsh system of legal industrial servitude. Each of these systems which we have described could be conducted under such wholesome restraining influences as would exert a beneficial effect upon all criminals except the perversely incorrigible, — who should always be kept apart from the less vicious in every penal institution. As negro women form no small proportion of the Southern convict class, the opportunities for their domestic industrial training and the probabilities of

their moral reclamation are infinitely greater in a well-conducted rural reformatory than in the best-equipped Southern penitentiary.

A fundamental feature in racial criminology, and one whose consideration should never be put aside in endeavor after penal treatment, is the fact that the negro is a moral pervert, not so much from inclination as from a lack of training; that as a criminal he comes into the custody of the state charged with a violation of its laws, but ignorant of ethical distinctions. The duty, then, of the state, as we see it, is to take up the work of ethical training at its very foundations, and make of the negro man or woman committed to its keeping what we have a right to expect of children reared in an atmosphere of moral rectitude. It may be objected that this is not the purport of penal discipline, but such objection should have no weight. These people are the product of an environing civilization, which, though far from being satisfactory in achievement, has neglected to do its obvious duty by its inferior classes. The sole question is, Shall the state arrest depravity by moral culture, or engulf society by neglecting to instil in the minds of its citizens habits of sobriety, industry, and morality? Where these elements of character exist, crime is unknown; hence every measure which has for its object the substantial and effective reduction of crime must have root and foundation in the moral elevation of the individual. This can only be achieved by the inculcation of sound morality imparted through



righteous examples of living, healthful and wholesome surroundings, industrial training, and steady employment in youth and manhood. So much the social organism owes to its members. The eradication of crime will come, we may be sure, just in proportion as mankind becomes more rational in thought and moral in action, and submits to self-imposed restraints upon passion, cupidity, and other infractions of the Golden Rule.

Fundamentally speaking, the congenital criminal class is rarely amenable to such reformatory agents as are aimed to effect a moral aversion to criminal acts. Negroes of this class can be restrained by fear, though whatever induces fear must be swift, inexorable, and certain. Nevertheless, while fear may and does secure their outward conformity to ordained requirements, it is entirely devoid of vitalizing regenerative force. To comprehend these conditions it is necessary to realize that to the negro mind the serving out of an imposed penalty fully pays all legal indebtedness to society for the infraction of its laws, much in the same respect that a financial debt may be liquidated by the payment of current money. With these facts before us, and aware that the great majority of the freedmen's misdeeds are limited to minor infractions of law, it is well to consider the degree of punishment which such crimes merit.

Broadly stated, the license of liberty has well-nigh destroyed in the crime-disposed freedman every vestige of law-abiding desire; hence, for some offences,

the negro should be whipped: he will respect the lash when he will respect nothing else. A judicially administered whipping, we are confident, would be an efficacious remedy for certain phases of negro crime, and would prove a wholesome deterrent to many who are criminally inclined. It would be opprobrious on account of its association with slavery, and the negro culprit, deservedly chastised, would be more amenable thereafter to law and social order than if he had undergone a long imprisonment. In fact, incarceration in jail may be said to involve no punishment for negroes, but rather gives to the idle and vicious desired rest, and in the eyes of their racial friends elevates them to the dignity of martyrs. We seriously advise, therefore, for many obvious reasons, the infliction of corporal punishment upon all freedmen who commit offences not subject to long terms of imprisonment. To those who know the negro, the merits of this proposition will be incontrovertible. He is an overgrown, irresponsible child, and must be treated as a wilful, untrained child should be; though for sound reasons of public policy all punishment calculated to render a culprit execrable should be inflicted in private.

We hold no brief for the Southern white people, and have no unreasonable prejudice against the race with which, in color, we are identified. It is therefore in no partisan spirit that we enter upon the discussion of a phase of negro criminality which has attracted world-wide attention, and has to do with

those crimes against chastity alleged to be committed by individual freedmen. No one denies that grave social conditions exist between the races, or that the established social organism ordains that, while the negro may assimilate with American ideas, he cannot perpetuate his barbarous instincts on American soil without engendering a war of extermination. These distinctions are not unreasonable. The negro is of a preëminently sensual race, and one whose male members have an inordinate craving for carnal knowledge of white women. This observation may be conclusively verified by noting the lascivious glances and wanton actions of negroes toward such persons, in public or private contact. This yearning of the negro for consort with white women is conspicuously exemplified in Northern cities, where the degraded social atmosphere of the submerged conditions permits an indiscriminate commingling of white and black viciousness. It is the absence of such conditions in the South, but of whose existence the freedman has full knowledge, that inflames negro desire, and impels the ignorant and bestial to commit felonious assaults on women of all ages and colors. Such facts make evident to thoughtful observers that our conceptions of the rights and remedies of the racial problem must be recast in the light of what the negro really is, before a permanent solution can be reached.

Sound opinion is agreed that a forcible violation of the person of a chaste woman is an atrocious



offence of inexcusable malignity, and deserving of rigorous punishment, and that race condition does not detract from the enormity of a crime involving so much sinister brutality. Men have a right to be exasperated when wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters are outraged and murdered by animal brutality, and never in such cases is vengeance too urgent in its demands for expiation and redress. Effective methods of punishment should be instituted and carried into effect with remorseless insistence. We do not object to the killing of negroes or others who actually commit rape. We object to the methods resorted to in these summary executions, which are likely, through engendering habit, to permeate society and make possible lawless civic conditions.

As white and black society is now constituted it is evident that negroes are certain to be lynched, especially in the South, when it is believed that they have committed criminal assaults upon white women. It is but fair to say that, so far as our knowledge goes, no one has ever been executed for this crime unless there was in existence strong *prima facie* evidence of guilt. It is significant that, however horrible may have been the cruelties inflicted in some instances of summary punishment, decent negro innocence is never lynched for indecent acts. It is still more surprising, in view of the widespread asseverations of the innocence of negro victims, and the deserved denunciation of their murderers, that the freedmen have never engaged in any organized

attempt to bring well-known white lawbreakers to justice. They have neither procured warrants of arrest from examining magistrates, nor sought their indictment before grand juries, nor even undertaken to create a wholesome sentiment against Southern lawlessness. It cannot be said, in extenuation of this condition of affairs, that the freedmen are helpless and ignorant when the wealth and intelligence of their race is lodged in the South. The truth is, the freedmen know there are negroes of a certain class who, bestial by nature and lascivious by breeding, are wholly lacking in self-restraint when their sexual instincts are aroused; that when opportunity offers they will, and do, commit criminal assaults on women and female children of either race. This fact is patent to every intelligent resident in the South.

Since the representative freedmen, who are on the ground and have full knowledge of all the facts at issue, neither protest nor make public affirmation that innocent members of their race are victims of lawless summary executions, it would be well for the negroes of the North who are bent on apotheosizing their criminal brethren and execrating the white avengers of chaste womanhood, to understand that they are in no position to advise or to direct in this matter. When they have spoken, they have not only condoned actual crime, but advised lawless retaliation in cases where known negro criminals have been summarily punished. Such advice, it is

needless to say, is wanting in every element of common sense, and gives evidence that they are inferior to their Southern brethren in qualities of manhood. But lawlessness will not be suppressed by lawlessness. The law-abiding negroes of our Southern section, knowing their race criminals to be criminal from choice, and deserving neither defence nor pity, will never follow the revolutionary teachings of harebrained sophists, who, safe in their own section, are advising them to seek destruction through lawless retaliation. We are all agreed that illiterate degradation is a blight upon any community, and, when not eradicated by contact with civilization, it ought to be forcibly exterminated. How much more pernicious, then, must be the moral infamy of a people? Instead of counselling the negro to greater lawlessness, every effort should be made to endow him with self-respect and self-discipline in order that he may learn to repress his evil instincts and cease to commit crimes. We guarantee that, when he is taught to know and respect the rights of others and is gifted with manhood and common sense, racial friction will cease, and lawless murders, so far as the negro is concerned, will end.

Meanwhile, we are not to lose sight of the fact that the relation between the races is daily becoming more liable at any moment to precipitate actual hostilities between them. The gravity of the situation is further accentuated for the reason that the ignorant and credulous freedmen have no adequate



conception of their shortcomings. Devoid of discernment and sober judgment, they pose as the peers of their immediate white fellow-citizens, such is their colossal conceit, and are imbued with the belief that the people of the North stand ready to support and defend them in these pretensions. We have a well-founded belief that these disorders are amenable to corrective influences, and so far as negroes are related the process is simple. Lynching will stop when they cease to commit heinous crimes, and when the freed men and women who desire the confidence and esteem of their fellow-citizens set a higher estimate on morality and chastity. But, as the matter now stands, there is much in Southern social conditions that will not bear the light of criticism, and that too on the part of the freedmen, so low in many instances is the moral sense and self-respect of their teachers and preachers. While more might be said on this subject, one thing is evident: the moral regeneration and social transformation of Southern society, as represented by both races and sexes, is of imperative requirement before there can be any permanent erasement of social disorder in that section.

In dealing with negro criminality we must never lose sight of the fact that our freedmen are incapable of originating independent methods of living; that above everything else they are imitators pure and simple, and inevitably adopt the manners of those around them. Surrounded by a civilization to

whose control they are held in abject, if not willing, submission, they follow as a matter of course the example of their superiors in criminal knowledge. The depravity of the race is a result of environment, as well as of heredity and largely instigated by the lawlessness of a resident white class, and it ought to be evident that negro regeneration is out of the question until the white race is elevated into orderly methods of conduct. How that shall be done is a serious problem, though it does seem as though the sober sense of the nation would some day awake to the folly of contributing hundreds of men and millions of dollars to doubtful missionary enterprises abroad, when so much misery and crime riot in our midst. A Christianity which ebbs and flows in carnal incongruities at home is hardly the proper custodian of the morals of alien races. It is a common-sense conclusion, that we should first right our own wrongs and correct our own abuses before undertaking to impose our civilization on others. These just remarks are deserved of a people who trample under foot the golden precepts of the divine Teacher, and who, without justice or mercy, wantonly inflict savage methods of punishment upon an ignorant and helpless class of cobelievers and fellow-citizens.

It is correct to say that fully ninety per cent of the freedmen are reasonably law-abiding, and, apart from an instinct for petty pilfering, are fairly honest in deportment. They have the confidence and sup-

port of orderly white society, and are rarely molested by its lawless class. On the other hand, the most liberal estimate will not allow the negro criminal class to exceed ten per cent of the race, and, singularly enough, this is about the percentage that white lawlessness bears to the orderly people of the South. Each, however, is a constant menace to the community in which it exists and odious from sheer wantonness: one, because of the heinousness of lustful crimes; the other, by its lawless summary executions. It is not the number of negroes lynched that makes such acts execrable, for the annual summary executions are less than two hundred, but the fact that such lawless methods deny to the accused the exercise of his highest privilege, — a free and impartial trial before a legally constituted tribunal. Were this phase of lawlessness directed solely against criminal assaults on women, it might have a color of justification; but while that is the offence for which negroes are mainly lynched, there are not infrequently summary executions of them for murder, arson, and theft. Heinous and inexcusable brutalities have also been perpetrated upon this people for no other reason than their affiliation with the Republican party. A carnival of injustice and cruelty drove them from the domain of politics. Demoralization followed; and then a retributive justice brought disaster to those who were the chief instigators of the forceful exclusion of the negro from the political field.



Lynching may be correctly described as the infliction of summary punishment for alleged offences, without authority of law; and there is among sane minds common agreement that such lawless violence is an execrable usurpation of ordained legal functions. As a mode of punishment for the freedmen criminal class there is never under any circumstance excuse or justification for resorting to it. It cannot be said that it is to be approved by the best sentiment of any community, yet when inflicted upon negroes for the commission of certain crimes the perpetrators are assured of absolute immunity from punishment. No negro is likely to be legally acquitted in the South of the charge of criminal assault, or in fact of any heinous offence, when a strong presumption of guilt exists. No negro charged with criminal assault upon a white woman ever has been acquitted. Hence there is justification for the assertion that, so far as the white people are concerned, the impulse to indulge in mob brutalities arises from their low sense of accountability to law; that their lawlessness is the sequence of freedom from those restraints which obtain in law-abiding communities.

Lynching is resorted to merely to appease and gratify an instinctive brutality on the part of a lawless element of the white race. No man can foresee the final results of such disorders. Nevertheless, it is evident that, if current individual usurpations of authority continue, all legal morality and social obedience will cease, our civilization will be erased,

and barbaric methods will take the place of law and order. What the South needs is an enforcement of equitable law. Its mobs now exercise a tremendous discretionary power, of such far-reaching consequences as should make men pause in their madness.

The question has been raised again and again as to why the national government does not take cognizance of local disorders, and use its authority for the suppression of lynching. But one familiar with the genius of our social organism will readily understand that constitutional limitations effectually intervene. The Federal government is limited to national interests. It is inhibited from taking cognizance of the acts of individual citizens except as they may become trespassers upon national rights. Under existing conditions, then, national functions can neither deal with white lawlessness nor cope with black criminals, and no enactment by the Congress of the United States touching this matter would have the slightest standing in the Federal judiciary. We do not doubt but that Congress has the constitutional right to enact a law for the trial and punishment of lynchers by United States courts when the victims of mob violence are aliens or non-resident citizens. In such cases, the responsibility of the Federal government for individual protection seems to be established. On the other hand, the state is supreme within its own domain, and has full and complete control over its citizens. No writ nor process of law can issue and

no action can be begun in a Federal court against a citizen of a state unless the plaintiff is a resident of another state, or unless the alleged offence was committed against the United States. Personal wrongs are to be corrected and personal rights defended by that state within whose jurisdiction cause of action lies. If that state will not act on the complaint of its citizens or is powerless to enforce its decrees, the individual sufferer has no relief, so long as public sentiment is against him.

This brief exposition of state and national duties and functions exhibits a phase of jurisdiction which ought to be eliminated from our civil polity. For, so long as these lawless conditions obtain, the character of our civilization is impeached, the stability of our institutions imperilled, the integrity of our judicial system questioned, and our social fabric brought to the verge of disrepute. Unquestionably, then, two grave and imperative duties are laid upon us: one is to eliminate usurpation of the law's prerogative, the other to suppress criminal assaults upon chastity,—for no social autonomy is secure that does not rest on the virtue and morality of its citizens.

We recognize a disposition on the part of thoughtful men in the South to face this problem in an honest and righteous way,—men who are showing by words and acts that they not only feel a personal responsibility for lawless citizenship, but are using such means as lie within their power to rid their



section of so foul a stigma. To this better element of the Southern white people, grappling with a tremendous social problem, sympathy and help should be freely extended. While they have among their own people a vicious and turbulent element, whom they are endeavoring to mould into respect for and obedience to law, they have also to deal with a negro class who are not only unresponsive to moral requirements, but are largely incapable of self-government. We are indebted to the sentiment they have aroused for the suggestion that there should be municipal liability in every county where sanguinary outbreaks occur, and adequate compensation awarded to the heirs of persons who are the victims of mob violence. It is also proposed that local municipalities should be held amenable to the state for failure to protect the life of the alleged criminal, as well as for failure to conform to the requirements of law in the punishment of the mob offenders.

We are concerned chiefly with the cause which instigates sectional lawlessness, and our message to Southern civilization is to exterminate by law its lawless white element; at the same time, to exterminate at all hazards and at any cost the savage despoilers of maiden virtue or wifely honor, and do it so thoroughly that the inexorable, remorseless certitude of punishment will make the lives and persons of the women of the South as safe in field, forest, and public highway as in their private homes. Our interest in the public welfare has prompted us to

draft a measure for the correction of these evils, and one which we are gratified to know has received the approval of many of the leading publicists of the country. Its chief merits are the adequate safeguarding of all the rights of accused persons, the infliction of a penalty that would effectually deter others from committing like crimes, and the removal of all incitement to lawless usurpation of authority or justified excuse for its exercise. The punishment which we suggest for persons convicted by due process of law of criminal assaults upon women is an untried remedy, and the most that can be urged against it is that a heinous crime has a harsh punishment. Nevertheless, in the present abnormal condition of public morality, a measure of this kind cannot do otherwise than exert a wholesome influence on white and black society.

It is proposed that, when any male person of the age of fifteen or upward shall be charged with an attempt to commit an assault on a female person of any age or condition, with intent to violate her chastity and have carnal knowledge of her under duress and against her will, or upon the commission of such act, such person shall undergo an examination before a court of competent jurisdiction, and, upon conviction thereof, by due process of law, shall undergo emasculation, and be further subjected to such restraint as the nature of the case and the welfare of the community justifies. It will be observed that this proposition embraces deterrent features,

as well as punitive functions. One is as essential to the well-being of society as the other, and any measure which does not exert a restraining influence upon the vicious classes is of doubtful value. It may be that in actual operation the severity of this proposition might work occasional injustice to innocent persons. That, of course, must be a regrettable miscarriage of justice. But such a remote possibility should not prevent a resort to heroic methods in dealing with the outlawries of our civilization. On the other hand, the lawless and barbarous methods of *ex parte* criminal procedure now in vogue, and bound to continue unless suppressed by orderly judicial methods, can never be approved even as crime deterrents. For, if current reports are to be trusted, felonious assaults on female chastity multiply in inverse ratio to the severities inflicted on the offenders.

All law-abiding people prefer that retribution for crime shall be judicially and legally decreed. The merit of the above suggestion lies in the fact that it substitutes orderly procedure for private passion and revengeful force. Were it in force, such acts would not be committed, unless instigated by sheer wantonness. Observe that accusations of criminal assaults on women are to be sifted in private before a properly constituted tribunal. Where the guilt of the accused is established, the culprit is by surgical methods to be rendered incapable of repeating the act. The prime object of legal punishment is to avenge society and



deter others from committing like offences against social order, and both of these ends are compassed in this proposition. Moreover, our knowledge of negro nature convinces us that one living example of judicial emasculation would be worth, as a deterrent object-lesson to the race, a thousand summary executions of appalling barbarity. There are negroes who commit unspeakable offences, and will do so as long as such crimes are not made odious, and vice and virtue cleft asunder by a chasm of spanless width.

## CHAPTER IX

### MENTAL TRAINING

THE American system of free public instruction, to which we owe that general diffusion of knowledge so characteristic of Northern people, had its origin in New England. The Puritans bequeathed an inestimable legacy when they instituted free schools in the struggling colonies, and gave to an embryo nation institutions of higher education. We are also indebted to that fearless people of rugged virtues and stern morals for many of the best phases of our social development, and Puritan influence is conspicuously visible in those lofty national impulses which regard knowledge and wealth as instruments of beneficent service to humanity.

The present school system of the South may be fairly designated as a visible landmark of *post bellum* reconstruction and legacy of Republican administrative control. Previous to that period, the public school, though a recognized institution in most of the Southern states, had but a fitful existence and meagre support, — chiefly because the children of the wealthy class attended private schools. The poor whites were indifferent to learning, and to teach the blacks, free or slave, was a crime. As it now exists,

the Southern school system is inferior in achievement to the Northern. The cost of public instruction is increased by the requirement of separate teachers and buildings for the white and negro children. Moreover, as the cities alone have really efficient schools, dense ignorance abounds among both classes of children in the rural districts. The Southern negro children of school age aggregate 2,800,000, yet only about half of that number are enrolled in the public schools, and of those registered less than three-fifths are in constant attendance. That there are gross defects in the current school system is evidenced by the fact that, since 1868, the Southern states have raised by taxation, and expended for negro education, nearly \$100,000,000 without making any visible inroad on negro illiteracy, — or rather, we should say, on negro obtuseness; for many of the freedmen who read and write are incomprehensibly lacking in intelligence.

The gravity of the Southern illiterate situation has attracted wide attention, and many plans have been suggested for bettering it; among others, national aid for the education of the negro and other illiterate citizens has been from time to time suggested. Of course, we are familiar with the constitutional objections which have been raised to Federal interference in matters of this sort, notwithstanding it is admitted on all sides that illiteracy is a menace to republican institutions. We, however, believe it to be the imperative duty of a free government to provide ways and



means for an intelligent instruction of its citizens ; and that this essential and true function of government cannot be evaded without imperilling the foundations on which our institutions rest, viz. an intelligent consent of the governed.

Two distinct and antagonistic forces are engaged in attempts to enlighten the freedmen ; one is civic, the other sectarian, in management and influence. The one under municipal supervision imparts instruction in studies ranging from the lowest primary to the highest academic, and in time service ranges from two to nine months a year. The state institutions devoted to advanced negro learning, and classified as high schools, normal institutes, and colleges, are, so far as we have been able to ascertain, 68 in number. The students in annual attendance upon them will not fall far short of 18,000, four-fifths of whom must be reckoned as pupils of the city high schools.

The Southern negro schools under sectarian control comprise 22 universities, 31 colleges, 26 normal schools, 23 institutes, 15 academies, and 12 seminaries. They have an estimated value of eight millions, and a reported annual income of \$850,000. The latest statistics, which are here given in round numbers, show the student attendance to be in collegiate, professional, and normal courses, 8000 ; in intermediate grades, 16,000 ; in elementary grades, 28,000 ; those engaged in industrial studies are put at 17,000. These statistics, we caution, are not to be implicitly trusted,

for, although furnished by those in control, they are nevertheless inaccurate in details, and altogether misleading in many other very important respects. One significant feature not likely to escape notice is that, notwithstanding their high-sounding titles, all of these institutions are chiefly engaged in primary work, and appear to be attempting to do what the public schools are doing.

The instruction of the freedmen was first undertaken in the fall of 1861, under the guidance of many noble, self-sacrificing white men and women from the North, who unfortunately began their labors under the false notion that their negro pupils, with centuries of mental density behind them, should be taught by the same methods and along the same lines as Northern white children of intelligent ancestry environed with more or less cultured homes. The result has been that a series of misfortunes have ensued, all too apparent to intelligent and impartial observers. The chief blunder, however, and the one which has inflicted lasting harm upon the freedmen, was committed when religious bigotry and sectarian rivalry, casting aside all notions of the negro's welfare, decreed his ethical and mental spoliation. This conclusion is obviously just; for when the war ended and reconstruction began, there sprang up all over the South sectarian universities, colleges, academies, institutes, and seminaries, in name, but not in efficiency, and which have since proved a delusion and snare to the cause of enlightenment.

To test the correctness of the foregoing statement, we need only refer to the fact that Atlanta, Georgia has 7 negro institutions of learning; Nashville, Tennessee, 4; and New Orleans, Louisiana, 4; and that out of these 15 institutions, the Congregationalists control 4, the Baptists 4, and the Methodists 5 schools, with all of them constantly engaged in a factional warfare for supremacy in influence and patronage. An analysis of the latest statistics of these several institutions conclusively substantiates our contention that academic training for the negro masses, at this stage of their development, is detrimental to the best interests of the race.

Observe that 8 of these institutions are set down as universities, 3 as colleges, 3 as seminaries, and 1 as an institute. They report 232 teachers, of whom 148 are white, and their combined attendance of students is put at 4112, of whom 2835 are engaged in elementary common school branches. Their undergraduates number about 1265, though less than 50 are annually graduated. A closer examination into this subject shows that all of these institutions are located in cities having excellent common school facilities, and that, out of the 4000 students in attendance, nearly 3000 are engaged in those elementary studies that the public schools teach. The irresistible conclusion is that these denominational colleges and universities are wasting a wealth of energy to no good purpose. To nine-tenths of negroes such academic attendance is a senseless



waste of time, for few of those who enter these institutions complete the prescribed course.

The fundamental objection to current methods of negro education is that existing institutions breed and foster in the minds of their students false notions of the intent and purpose of a college training. This is made evident by the fact that negro students are known to spend their time in skimming their textbooks without acquiring any adequate conception of what their contents teach, but are fixed in the belief that mere attendance at the school confers distinction. Such cases are not rare. We have knowledge of scores of young men and women with diplomas from negro colleges, and of many undergraduates engaged in Latin and Greek studies, who cannot without great difficulty read plain English print, and whose current speech betrays their ignorance of, or indifference to, the simple grammatical construction of their mother tongue. Moreover, nowhere is the arrogance of ignorance and paucity of knowledge more exemplified than in these college attendants, whose silly vaporings provoke the contempt of sensible people.

Many rural freedmen have deprived themselves of the necessities for living in order to support a son or daughter at some distant college in the hope of better things to come, only to discover later that their educated children were no longer in sympathy with their humble parentage. Their hearthstone was forgotten and ties of kinship broken, when the college egotist,

sensational in speech, extravagant in manner, ignoble in aims, and ignominious in ends, went forth from a community which had looked to him for inspiration and guidance because his opportunities for knowledge were greater than its own. Another lamentable outcome of these conditions is that the South is being overrun with incompetent teachers, incapable lawyers, illiterate doctors, and immoral preachers, who rival each other in preying on the credulity of a confiding constituency.

It ought to be clear to every intelligent mind aware of these facts, that any mechanical knowledge of books imparted to men and women condemned to inexorable poverty merely opens their eyes to wants that can never be met, and to a sphere of living they can never enter. Are not desires impossible to gratify awakened, social contrasts discovered, and a material longing aroused that is destined never to be gratified other than in iridescent dreams? To take men from the plough, and women from the hoe, and, by a sham process of enlightenment, transform them from actual producers into idle consumers, is to foment infinite mischief. Far better for them and the race that they should till small plots of ground, have homes, rear families, and live in comparative ignorance, than to undergo a brief existence in what is none other than a fool's paradise of specious learning.

But, while facts fully justify our exhibit of the mental characteristics of the negro, no sane person believes him to be solely blamable for his mental

density. Under the methods employed for his enlightenment, it would have been surpassingly strange had he emerged therefrom in any other plight than he has. It is therefore with good reason that we assert that the fatuity of race educational sponsors is largely responsible for the mental and moral blunders of our educated negroes. Nor is there the slightest doubt that false notions of the functions of school training are responsible for much that is amiss in many phases of race life. The negro has been taught to believe that his mental powers are merely hidden in darkness, that schools are bound to bring them to light, and that attendance on schools educates; and that education is the ability to state, more or less correctly, prescribed phrases.

The belief that such "education" really awakens any and every sort of mind is widespread among illiterate classes, and is strengthened by the fact that negroes seem readily to acquire knowledge, when they are learning nothing but words. Negroes, therefore, imagine they know a subject-matter when they have acquired its terminology. Facile speech gives them credit for knowledge which they do not possess nor are likely ever to acquire. Intelligent conception, reflection, comparison, and judgment are largely absent from their mental outfit. Most of the race who undergo such methods of mental training are ignorant of every fundamental principle of life and living. But how could it be otherwise, when the drowsy energies of the brain are not awakened



to intelligent action nor the how and why of things ascertained.

Our objections to the results attained by the average college training of the freedmen are well sustained by the mischievous policy of leading negro educators, but as this does not cover the whole ground, we shall consider other equally important features. At the beginning of his free career two fundamental obstacles, blinding, bewildering, and insurmountable, were thrust in the pathway of the freedman. One was partisan politics, the other sectarian education. Each still clutches him with a remorseless grip, and what the outcome will be no man can foresee. One thing is evident, with all our innumerable agencies and reformatory devices, we are not making headway in the regeneration of negro mankind. While the school-taught generation of negroes has acquired a veneer of intellectual superiority over their unlearned fathers and mothers, they have neither their strength of character nor sincerity of purpose, and are immensely below them in sober conduct and enduring worth.

No broad scheme for the solution of these educational difficulties has ever been broached by those essaying to direct affairs. To us, however, it does seem feasible that all Southern negro educational agencies might unite in some sort of federative union for common warfare against ignorance and immorality. In fact, were personal ambition and sectarian folly set aside, it would be possible to institute a rational method of negro education,

wherein each state would have one well-equipped college, with efficient preparatory schools established in each county. The means of knowledge would thus be brought within reach of all classes, and we should have uniformity in method of instruction.

Institutional rivalry develops reprehensible methods for securing support and attendance. In many instances, in order to obtain students, free tuition is given and personal maintenance tendered, to which end donations are secured from the philanthropic North. This may be legitimate, but our conviction is that no institution of learning which is dependent upon public charity for its own existence and the maintenance of its students, can by any process of educational legerdemain impart to those whom it undertakes to instruct a robust manhood or womanhood. An endless chain of financial dependence runs all through its educational methods, and both teachers and students are, by the storm and stress of circumstances, compelled to assume the position of subservient mendicants. This attitude, in the case of negro students, breeds infinite mischief; for, dependent by nature on others, they sink into abject helplessness in becoming the beneficiaries of sentimental support.

To make a plain and candid presentation, many of the educators of the negro are neither honest in statement nor courageous in act in their effort to get money from the Northern people, and in exalting themselves at the expense of their rivals they set

up pretensions which have no foundation in fact. Especially are those claims reprehensible which imply that any particular negro school is essential to the welfare of the freedmen. Any honest investigation will show that there is no preëminence among the hundred and more fairly respectable negro institutions of higher learning, each of which is doing all that is possible under existing methods for the enlightenment of its pupils. Such pretensions to superior usefulness appear ridiculous when we consider that there are within the United States more than 35,000 negro graduates of various institutions of learning, though it cannot be said that their education has transformed them into teachers of righteousness and prophets of wisdom. The fundamental question, touching alike the usefulness of schools and pupils, is, What have these graduates contributed toward the regeneration and enlightenment of their people? This is a question that distant benefactors may rightly ask; and the more than \$30,000,000 which they have given for the enlightenment of negroes since their emancipation entitles them to courteous and candid answers.

While our statements concerning Southern negro schools and their methods of education will in the main hold true of all, it is a genuine pleasure to us, and but simple justice to a worthy institution, to make an exception in the case of Berea College. This school, which is located in Kentucky, on the border line between the Blue Grass region and the



mountains in the eastern section of that state, enjoys the unique distinction of being the only institution in the South which admits white and colored students in any considerable number. Its average annual attendance, exceeding four hundred pupils, is about equally divided between the sexes and races, all of whom sit together side by side at a common table, and recite in the same classes.

Berea College ranks as the pioneer school in Southern negro education ; but, what is of far greater importance, it has also practically and successfully solved the problem of the coeducation of the races, not only for that state but for the entire South, and it is a matter of profound satisfaction to state that not a single case of misalliance has followed this experiment. On the contrary, a wholesome restraint and marked respect is shown by both races in their mutual intercourse, and the effects here noted are exerting a healthy and increasing influence elsewhere upon the Southern educational work.

This institution of which we have made mention has had a corporate existence for more than forty years, and owes its inception and success to the indefatigable labors of Rev. John G. Fee and his worthy associates in the home mission service. It was primarily established for the educational wants of the white mountain people of the South, whose poverty and ignorance at that period held them in subjection and chattelism to a near-by oligarchy, but whose growing millions may yet become an important factor in

American patriotism and civilization. The mountains and valleys of Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama shelter the cabins of the most unique class of illiterates on the American continent, and furnish the most profitable field for humanitarian effort within the whole range of Christian endeavor. Nor will philanthropy ever bestow a worthier benefaction than that which shall bring to these people light and knowledge.

We have spoken in terms of commendation of the results of co-race education at Berea. Nevertheless we should not approve, even if it were possible to effect it, mixed school education throughout the South, for at this time neither race is prepared to enter upon so hazardous an experiment. But, as all things come to those who work and wait, we should in the meantime use all diligence and discretion in training the negro into docility, sobriety, intelligence, and morality, against the day of his inheritance of every right and privilege of American citizenship.

Before proceeding farther it may be well to define our understanding of the term education. Our conception is that education is not an accumulation of facts, but an attitude of mind, a mental poise, that imparts to its possessor the power of knowing how to know. Stored mental facts, while an essential and the chief element in successful human endeavor, differ as widely from education as flower from fruitage. Education, in the true sense, is the development under sound discipline of all our faculties,

mental, moral, and physical, to the end that knowledge, capacity, fitness, and completeness may be embodied in the learner. In support of this position we may quote no less an authority than President Eliot of Harvard University, who, in speaking of mental development, says, "There are four things in which the individual youth should be thoroughly trained, if his judgment and reasoning powers are to be systematically developed, and those four things are observing accurately, recording correctly, comparing, grouping, and inferring justly, and the ability of expressing the result of these mental apprehensions in cogent, coherent language." Nothing less than a training of this character will endow the negro with intelligence.

This being our view of what education is, we shall seek to ascertain to what extent the negro is amenable to its teachings. When the negro is for the first time brought under intellectual instruction, we are impressed with his mental and moral obtuseness. We observe no intelligent awakening of his slumbering reason, no manifestation of mental activity, and we discover that his apparent intelligence is a superimposed outfit. Inquiry into the causes which produce this state of mind reveals the fact that negro intellect is abnormally constituted, and rarely evinces other than sluggish response to intellectual promptings. Such disclosures enable us to understand why the negro is deficient in strong mental power, and why, with all his scholastic training, he



has never attained profound erudition nor given proof of originality in thought. The educators of the freedmen may be honest in belief, but they are mistaken in fact, whenever they assert that negro students understand and assimilate the ideas and moral principles set forth in their teachings. We can easily comprehend how such teachers may be deceived by the mental retentiveness or memory of the negro, his clever imitations, and fluent speech.

What we desire to have clearly realized is that the freedman, who is bred in mental stupor and reared in moral insensibility, cannot be awakened to efficient intelligence by any system of superficial instruction, a fact that holds true throughout every stage of negro development. For example, the child of the ordinary freedman is from birth enveloped by a home life of credulous darkness; mental distortions are its inheritance, and weird superstitions its acquirements, both of which are ingrained in a nature that instinctively resists rational thought and sober action. Therefore, when a child of this sort appears in the schoolroom, the honest teacher faces a twofold problem: one is to uproot false notions obstinately inhering; the other, to awaken thought in the mind of a being to whom every mental step is a puzzle and every new notion a bewilderment. There is also an ever present consciousness of the danger of hopeless relapse, when the pupil passes from the radiance of the schoolroom to the twilight of the fireside. Since all educators of the freedmen find among their

students these mental conditions, it is obvious that the character of the instruction given ought to conform to actual needs, regardless of preconceived notions or accustomed methods of instruction. We should deal with negro necessities; for the present, in education as in material things, he can forego luxuries.

The negro student, then, should be taught to read with discrimination as well as to know the art and function of legible writing. A capable knowledge of the fundamental principles of arithmetic are to him a necessity. Moreover, his obvious deficiencies in speech, in private and public conversation, render it needful that he should have a thorough understanding of the elements of grammar. And equally important is his intelligent comprehension of the geography and history of his country. None of these should be neglected. But what he needs even more is sound instruction in ethics and civics, in order that he may have a just appreciation of his relation to God and his fellow-men. As for any higher instruction, the biography of noble men will awaken in his breast worthy sentiments, and instil in his nature courageous desire. A knowledge of music will calm his turbulent emotions and awaken spiritual longings which an enlightened reason will soberly foster. Thus disciplined, he will become in due course an exemplary and worthy citizen.

The matter of training the negro in the ancient classics should be divested of all bigotry and igno-

rance, and dealt with in a spirit of fairness to all interests involved. We should consider that the Southern negro student inherits poverty and is environed by ignorance, and that a limited classical training breeds in him exaggerated notions of his scholarship and pedantic satisfaction with his scant attainments. For many sound reasons, it is madness for negroes who are ignorant of the essential principles of manhood or character to prowl round ancient cemeteries of literature, and pretentiously haunt the mausoleums of dead thought, while millions of their brethren are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. For our part, we regard a knowledge of the classics as one of the luxuries of literature, whose acquirement is not necessary to the busy life of our century; and especially do we look upon the acquisition of these tongues as useless to a people whose rudimentary intelligence has not awakened to needs pressing in more important directions.

Within the whole range of negro scholarship we know of no one who would not be infinitely better qualified for rendering efficient service to mankind, did he, instead of having an elementary knowledge of the classics, possess an intelligent knowledge of the English language, and a substantial acquaintance with what it contains. A language which is known to be the vernacular of well-nigh a hundred and sixty millions of the foremost people on the face of the earth, and voices a literature of value and permanence beyond that of any other in the world, ought



to be assiduously studied; and to be ignorant of its treasures is to stand in the twilight of the most transcendent mental illumination accessible to modern man.

We say, educate the negro by all means, deeply, broadly, and thoroughly, but do not waste time and means on promiscuous effort. The force of this suggestion is manifest when we consider that not one negro in a thousand has sufficient mental or moral stamina to take sound scholastic training, or live up to the full measure of to-day's opportunities and loyally meet obligations of racehood. Hence, dealing now with the realities of life and knowledge, our insistence is that none but negro men and women of inherent worth, of whom there are not a few, ought to be selected or permitted to take an academic training, and especially at the expense of the generous public. The requirement that we would impose is that all negro students, before being permitted to engage in classical studies, should undergo a judicious and discriminating investigation as to character, capacity, and contemplated vocation; and that only those who give ample proof of possessing all of the required qualifications should be trained in higher educational methods. To be sure, sound judgment and discriminating insight into negro characteristics would be essentials for those who undertook the task of assorting the deserving from the undeserving among the freed people. But, however onerous the burden, this ought to be done, if wholesome

race development is sought. The fatuous methods employed in their instruction become more and more censurable when one considers the loss of time, waste of means, and neglect of opportunity to the negroes of restricted abilities, and when one acquires a clearer insight into the character of such training. But, despite sane protest, and notwithstanding the futility of these so-called classical educational methods, they are likely to continue so long as misinformed philanthropy can be induced to continue its rash generosity. To our negro educators and Northern benefactors we commend this bit of philosophy, uttered by a shrewd, common-sense member of the race, "There is no use in wasting a thousand-dollar education on a ten-cent brain."

The chief concern in training the freedmen should be the endeavor to impart knowledge under such genuine inspiration as will awaken aspiration, stimulate desire of knowledge, quicken apprehension, strengthen purpose, and develop negro character in harmony with the truths of life and nature. Education, as Herbert Spencer says, "should not teach men how to live, but how to deal justly with one another," and surely the negro, above all others, needs the clear sunlight of wise discernment, a strong basis of moral rectitude, a right discipline of instinctive habits, and a true sense of the requirements of domestic life, in order that he may know the rights of others as well as his own obligations, and gain the conviction that self-knowledge, self-control, and self-reverence is the fulcrum of all power and the gateway to all truth.

This, however, is not the kind of education the freedmen are acquiring, in the schools and out of them. There is among negroes of intellectual pretensions the disposition to regard deftness in verbal gymnastics as the highest type of scholastic achievement, notwithstanding the fact that fluency in speech is no assurance of knowledge, and that mere words, without the breath of life upon them, have never yet awakened the soul of man. Hazlitt truly says, "Mere intellectual endeavor, however keen-witted, and sharp-edged in expression, is the meanest of human faculties when stripped of all vital humanizing power, and represents nothing more than an ingenious piece of mental machinery." There is a world of wisdom in this utterance. But ignorance is a bigot, and its negro disciples, heedless of facts, cling with stolid indifference to the notion that words and not ideas constitute intelligence. The negro is the adult infant of our composite society, who, wanting in wholesome thought and prudent conduct, has been surfeited with sentiment, bewildered by precepts, and crazed by flattery, until he believes himself to have passed at one bound from the depths of ignorance to the summits of knowledge. We may concede the good intentions of his educators but we deplore their mistakes. Their persistent blundering emphasizes our conviction that from the cradle to the grave the freedman sadly needs the strong hand and firm guidance of educated, God-fearing men and women, who, for conscience' sake, teach him truth and righteousness.



Are the negroes aware of the inadequacy of their educational methods?—if so, why do they not institute some substantial protest within their own ranks?—are questions which naturally occur to thoughtful people interested in the freedmen's welfare. The answer to these questions must be that negroes to whom race leadership is accredited have shown a general incapacity for dealing intelligently with the great problems growing out of their race economy. There is no substantial reason for believing them conscious of the defects in their mental training. To assume otherwise would credit them with an understanding wholly at variance with their acts. We must also remember that the negro did not originate the system of instruction under which he has been trained, but took without choice that which was thrust upon him by those who were utterly ignorant of his actual needs. Still, there are some things that might have been done, and which negroes have omitted to do.

The recognized race leaders of the freedmen are their preachers and teachers. That these leaders are indifferent to race degradation, know nothing of disinterested service, and have no conception of robust integrity and steady obedience to truth and duty, is inferred from the fact that more than twelve thousand negro preachers are in the Southern states, engaged, in the main, in leading idle, if not vicious, lives. If these men were filled with an honest purpose to serve their people, they would, it seems, at

least have taught their ignorant followers how to read the Bible about which they prate, and have accomplished the infinite good that might have been wrought, had every church been transformed into a temple of learning. Had that course been pursued, negro illiteracy would now have been a thing of the past. But, despite earnest and disinterested appeals to them, that was not done, nor even attempted. We therefore make no reservation in the assertions that the religious leaders of the race have never given a whole-hearted support to its education, and that they are directly responsible for the race's present ignorance, as well as for some other phases of its degradation. The number of negro illiterates, young and old, exceeds three millions: and this mass of servile ignorance is convincing proof that the religious leaders are more intent on promoting their selfish ease, than in rendering unstinted service to the cause of human enlightenment.

Under common-sense management the religious organizations controlled by negroes are capable of rendering excellent service to the cause of education. So far they have taken no steps to supplant their illiterate priesthood with an educated ministry. In the work in which they do engage they persist in undertaking impossible achievements. Their several societies claim to have in operation some sixty odd schools, many of which are reported as universities and colleges, but which by their own exhibit are without adequate support or capable management,

and which make a ceaseless demand upon the scant resources of a deluded people. In order to lure means and students for their nondescript institutions, the mendacious claim of non-sectarian teaching is set up, notwithstanding none but sectarian leaders of the most bigoted type are in the seat of government, while the one great cardinal dogma, jealously guarding the ramparts of their belief, is that "He who is not with us is against us." It may be pertinently questioned why these schools are established and maintained, if not in the interest of and for the propagation of sectarian thought. Besides, these negroes ought to know that there does not exist non-sectarianism within denominational religious economy.

But, while the negro is known to be crassly ignorant, and confessedly on the lowest rung of American social development, he is not to be accredited with insurmountable mental density. What we have said, and do say, is that the agencies so far employed for his enlightenment have failed to awaken in him a spirit responsive to the civilization that environs him. On the other hand, we are convinced that, were the right means employed in negro training, his moral and mental nature would unfold in accord with the best impulses of the age. And we are not without hope that both negro pupils and their teachers may gather inspiration from the trend of the newer educational movements, and bring themselves into agreement with methods whose tide is toward practical



achievements. The aim of the best expressions of current educational work is, not to make scholars, but to make men and women. To that end the physical senses are trained in connection with the intellect to a point where the one supplements the other, in a common effort to lead from slumbering depths, into form and being, the ideas and faculties innate and inherent in human nature. This process does not crowd the memory with fact and data gleaned by other hands, nor cram the mind with opinions formulated *ex cathedra*. It does, however, develop natural faculties and physical endowments. The acquisition of knowledge is of secondary consideration, and bound to come, under any circumstances, in proportion as the intellect is broadened through observation. But to bring out and utilize in the highest measure the most valuable qualities of the head, the heart, and the hand, and the consecration of these functions to the reverence and obedience to God and the love and service of humanity, is, in our judgment, the realization of the ideal education.

Before the time of Christ the Greek philosophers asked, "What shall we teach the young?" and the answer then, as it ought to be now, was, "Teach them what they will have to do when they are men." We have here the hint and key for the instruction of the negro, — for whom the system of education should be primary and fundamental, and every step forward verified by actual proof of the intelligent discernment of the pupil. To this end, the best and most profita-

ble elementary instruction for illiterate and submerged classes like the negroes is, in our judgment, that which begins with what well-conducted kindergartens teach. We say this for the reason that children, coming from slovenly and disorderly homes, will there be taught to be deft of hand, gentle of touch, keen of vision, alert in action, tidy in habits, and modest in deportment, — acquirements that will prove of no small advantage to the future men and women of the race. In all the higher graded schools, public or private, there should be a well-defined system of daily industrial instruction, not with the view of teaching a trade (that cannot be done, and should never be undertaken in connection with mental training), but for the purpose of steadying and increasing the intellectual efficiency of pupils. The most serviceable instruction of this sort may be imparted through those industries with which the pupils are somewhat familiar; but, where these are not available, the most important factor within our knowledge is some method of sloyd.

Our preference for this system lies in the fact that, while it does not impart a knowledge of specialities, it lays a solid foundation for future industrial growth, which is all any method of school industrial training should undertake to do. Aside from the mental and physical development which negro pupils may acquire through sloyd and the kindergarten, both boys and girls should be daily exercised in military drills, the need and usefulness of which have long been obvious

to us. Military drill, apart from its many excellent physically developing features, teaches prompt and unquestioning obedience, and instils a respect for rightful authority. It inculcates courage, confidence, patience, and self-control, and enables pupils to perform with greater exactness their other duties, great and small. We are convinced that no method of supervising control is so productive of good results, in minds prone to disregard the essential elements of citizenship, as military discipline intelligently imparted and wisely enforced.

The foundation and superstructure of prosperity for men and nations lies in creative industrial activity, which truth, we fear, the negro will never fully realize until he has undergone systematic industrial discipline, and realized the pleasure and dignity which accrues from well-doing. We say this because we have observed among the freedmen a prevalent notion that mental training exempts them from manual effort, and because many of those who indulge in intellectual pretensions openly regard physical labor as involving personal degradation. Such aversion emphasizes the conviction that the primary and essential need of all classes struggling in the throes of poverty and illiteracy is sound industrial training. We regard such discipline as a fundamental factor in the development of negroes, in whom industrial inefficiency is conspicuously lacking. Our conclusions may appear paradoxical to those who are aware that the freed-



men now constitute the bulk of the Southern labor class, and are mindful of their generations of servile bondage. But there is a wide distinction between the intelligent industrial discipline we suggest and that forced drudgery of slave life which bred aversion to diligent labor and thoroughly unfitted the negro to become a true worker.

What we mean by industrial education is an intelligent training of the perceptive, constructive, and executive faculties of man, in order that he may have an intelligent notion of what he undertakes to do, and the faculty of knowing when and how to do it in the best way possible,—an acquirement of mental power which, it is needless to say, endows its possessor with intelligence of a high order. Nor does industrial training in conjunction with mental culture impair the efficiency of labor, despite existing false notions to the contrary. For nowhere is the power of knowledge more fully exemplified than in knowing how to do. It is a secret of thrift, just as poverty is the fruit of ignorance. It is also the true scientific method of mind awakening, and the only process of human education that makes men and women capable of the highest efficiency in service to their fellow-creatures. A training of this sort should be the leading requirement and set purpose of every negro school, in order that physical indolence as well as mental ignorance may be eradicated from minds prone to succumb to such forces.

Instead of sneering at industrial efforts or wasting golden opportunities in devising ways and means to evade industrial duties, we ought to realize that an ability to devise and construct is a divine faculty, and that the finite creations of man are inspired by an infinite Creator. Instructed hands are instruments of incalculable value and inconceivable possibilities; contrariwise, untaught hands and undisciplined muscles are as much raw material as iron, wool, and cotton; but just as their manufactured products increase many fold the use and value of the crude ore and staples, so trained hands, directed by intelligent brains, give to the man or woman possessing them an infinite superiority over their fellows who lack in this particular. When, therefore, the negro race acquires in the broadest and best sense an industrial education, there will come a radical regeneration of Southern social economy, and negro education will then stand for home life, domestic industry, public integrity, and national welfare. The lesson which negroes have yet to learn is that no man escapes some measure of toil, and that honest work of whatever kind never degrades a true man or woman, all of whom should learn to labor with patience, accuracy, and fidelity. Therefore the farmer, mechanic, dressmaker, wage-worker, and bread-winner of every sort needs to be thoroughly trained and equipped for whatever work may fall to his lot. It is this sort of training that constitutes an education in the truest sense, and

those who fail to avail themselves of such opportunities when they offer, deserve neither pity nor aid in any failure that may come to them in their future industrial career.

So far as the negro women are related to this question, their primary and fundamental need is a thorough training and discipline in the art of making and keeping a home. They are not skilful purveyors of the needs and wants of a home, and know scarcely anything of the nature and nutritive properties of food products, or their economical preparation and use. They need to know how to make wholesome bread, cook nutritious food, keep tidy homes, and rear decent families; otherwise the most recondite knowledge avails nothing, for it is no credit to a woman to write poetry, paint a picture, rave over music, and declaim nonsense from a public platform, and be a sloven and slattern in her home. It is a caricature of common sense, a parody of culture, for such persons to sniff at the working-women of their race. An aversion to work induces many negro women to forego laundry work rather than be put to the exertion of washing, and to keep only their reception room tidy while their bedrooms and kitchens are covered with dirt. We are moved to say that, instead of sending money South to educate young women in books, a wiser philanthropy would put them as domestics into Northern Christian country homes, where a three years' residence would do more to qualify them intelligently for the duties of



life than any number of years spent in the best institution of learning.

The industrial training which negro men should now receive is in that field of labor and kind of work to which they are limited. A thorough and complete knowledge of agricultural work is the one thing needful to them, and it should embrace such features as would give them an insight into the nature and productive capacity of different kinds of soils, and the drainage, irrigation, and tillage of these; the character, cultivation, and use of the different grain foods; the growth and curing of different grasses and the effect of their growth on the soil; the culture of leguminous and saccharine plants and of tuberous roots, and their use and value for foods; the growth and use of textile fibres; breeding and rearing of domestic animals, dairy farming, bee culture, and fruit growing, and every other essential feature bearing on a successful knowledge of agricultural life. It is this kind of knowledge that a dependent, toiling people need, a knowledge that will give them a workable insight into the forces of nature, and make them creators and producers in the material domain.

An industrial education of such character as we have described covers the entire ground of negro needs and wants. In comparison with this the current industrial teaching of his schools is no more than a senseless fad, honeycombed with wasted opportunities. We believe with Carlyle that all

work is divine, and until that sentiment is thoroughly comprehended and religiously followed, our freedmen will neither acquire social freedom nor rise above their present unenviable condition. Who can estimate the incalculable benefit that will come to them when they acquire an appreciation of the nobility of labor. When once a true conception of the functions of labor is acquired, there will come a desire for the technical knowledge of specialties, and negro institutions, with facilities for making capable mechanics, will then arise. The South needs trained workmen; and when it has educated its negro labor, it will have possessed itself of a superior type for its industries.

Some munificent donations have been made to the cause of negro education. Dr. Charles Avery left a bequest of more than \$500,000, a large part of which was used in founding Hampton Institute; while William F. Slater and Daniel Hand have each contributed \$1,000,000 toward this purpose. The Hand gift was intrusted to the care of the American Missionary Association. The Slater donation was committed to the custody of a board of trustees selected by the donor. It is nigh on to a score of years since this latter sum became available, during which time its trustees have annually distributed the net income among a number of Southern schools. Yet we deem it necessary to say that, with the best intentions on the part of its management, this money has failed to produce those results which the friends of negro education had a right to expect from its use.

The truth is that our Northern philanthropists, with no trustworthy knowledge of the conditions of the freedmen, have neither sought nor acquired capable insight into the needs and wants of negro life. Having been influenced by the special pleadings of interested advocates and their own imperious convictions, it is consequently small wonder that they have hitherto failed to deal with this problem in the most satisfactory manner. There are many excellent features of commendable character, both in the methods and results, of some phases of the Southern negro educational work. Nevertheless, its most zealous advocates, in confessing to a sense of disappointment, will not deny that a series of blunders have been committed by those who assume to be the negro's benefactor. The managers of the Slater fund have been, from the inception of their trust, in a position to reconstruct effectively the whole system of negro society; but so far, we regret to say, they have unwisely permitted golden opportunities to pass beyond their grasp.

The conviction is that the aim and intent of the donor of this fund was to give the largest measure of assistance compatible with a safe investment and assured income, to the race whom he sought to benefit. Obviously, then, the dictates of sound policy and business foresight required that this donation should have been invested in good agricultural lands in the South, and rented to selected negro families. Nor can the neglect to do this be excused on the ground of igno-



rance of Southern conditions. We pointed out to the trustees of the Slater fund, through Ex-President Hayes, many years ago, the feasibility of such an undertaking, and said then, as we do now, that the suggestions which we advanced regarding the training of the freedmen were by all odds the most rational method yet devised for their elevation, for in any practical application of them the physical amelioration and mental enlightenment of the freedmen were bound to keep pace together.

That a discriminating public may judge of the merits of our suggestions, we will recount them. Our advice was that twenty square miles of land should be purchased in each of ten designated Southern states; that the land bought in each state should be purchased in three different localities, with two of the tracts containing 4200 acres of land, and the other 4400 acres, — the aim of this distinction being to make the largest area a central supervising agent in each state. We further advised that after the land was bought 100 negro families of approved industry and integrity should be located on each purchase, in allotted homesteads of 40 acres to each family, and under conditions that required them to build their own cabins, furnish their own farming implements and animals, and pay for the use of the land an annual rental of four bales of cotton. These suggestions, as may be observed, contemplated the purchase of more than 100,000 acres of land, the selection and location of 3000 negro families, in sepa-

rate communities, and the establishment and maintenance of thirty schools. Of course no such movement should have been entered upon unadvisedly, and especially was it necessary to consider carefully what its probable cost and prospective results were likely to be.

In order to fully elucidate our proposition, we submitted detailed estimates, which were elaborated with great care. For example, we computed that the land would cost, at a maximum valuation, a sum not in excess of \$600,000; that the advance to tenants for subsistence would require \$150,000; while the cost of such necessary buildings as schoolhouses, houses for teachers, churches, stores, blacksmith and carpenter shops, would not have exceeded \$10,000 for each community. So far we have accounted for an expenditure of \$850,000, to which add \$50,000 for supervision and teaching, and we have an initial outlay of \$900,000 to record as the maximum expenditure to set on foot so extended a scheme for community education. On the other hand, a conservative estimate of probable results justifies the statement, that the annual rent from 3000 tenants would aggregate 12,000 bales of cotton, which, at the price cotton has ranged during the last ten years, would have brought at least \$300,000. Of course, the \$150,000 expended for food advances to tenants would also have been returned to the treasury, while the land reserved to educational uses would have produced enough cotton and breadstuffs to feed the teachers and pay their salaries. The industrial fea-

tures which we mentioned would, as a matter of course, be self-supporting; and it may be not unfairly claimed that, had such an educational work been inaugurated by the custodians of the Slater trust, the net income the first year would have exceeded \$400,000.

Had that amount been invested in a similar movement, the net income the second year would have exceeded a half million dollars; and had so wise and sensible a course been pursued for ten years, the trustees of this fund would then have had control of nearly 2,000,000 acres of land, the wholesome oversight of more than 30,000 negro families, the management of 300 industrial institutions; the supervision of the instructors of 60,000 pupils. They would, moreover, have had the supreme satisfaction of knowing that they had not only exceeded the most sanguine anticipations of the deviser of this trust, but, in having solved the problem of dealing with illiterate and indigent masses, they had furnished an object-lesson in political economy of inestimable value to the world. This, however, was not done; not even one experimental school was established. The original million-dollar gift is intact, and its income, amounting to about \$45,000 per annum, is parcelled out to importuning negro schools.

The consummation of an educational movement along the line of this suggestion would have eventually realized what the intent and purpose of negro training ought to be. Nor can it be said that vision-



ary and untried methods were proposed. Only existing and familiar agencies were to lay foundations for character building and intelligent development, the evident purpose of which was to train the negro to rely upon disciplined reason and sound judgment. Land and education, we have said again and again, lie at the root of any movement for the successful uplifting of any illiterate and submerged class, whether white or black. But as the matter now stands the negro's mental poverty keeps pace with his material indigence, nor will his awakening ever be achieved so long as physical wants are neglected.

Under the right sort of supervision, such as we have described, even the more impoverished negro tenants, as prospective landowners, are certain to acquire habits of thrift, frugality, and foresight in crop-raising. They would be trained to cultivate and reserve food products for future use; and reserved subsistence liberates the tenant from bondage to the shopkeeper as effectually as landownership lifts him from indigent beggary to comparative wealth. When a man has nutritious food, comfortable clothing, and snug shelter, with useful, remunerative employment, he has in every needful respect all the essentials of material riches. And while the members of a community would be inevitably brought together under processes of thrift and enlightenment, none the less would true family relations be developed through a kinship of aims and ends. With

these events achieved, we should no longer deal with phantoms, but realities, because we should then have accomplished for the negro race what all else has hitherto failed to do for it, — that is, put within its reach the means for self-help, and the opportunity to demonstrate its capacity for intelligent self-direction.

Reviewing what has preceded in this discussion, certain facts associated with the negro seem to have been established, namely, the paucity of his mental nature, the audacity of his egotism, the superficiality of his knowledge, and the inadequacy of the methods employed in his training. A great defect in negro institutional work is the forced insulation of the pupil from to-day's relations, and his subjection to an environment that, for the time being, dominates, but does not elevate or awaken his higher nature. We are therefore convinced that a feasible system of community education offers the most remunerative and satisfactory solution of the negro question.

The establishment of such communities involves an authoritative oversight and capable supervision of all dependent members. It involves the creation of schools of instruction, which resident children within certain ages would be required to attend eight months in the year, and where they would be taught such lessons as are best calculated to instil a sound knowledge of elementary letters and Christian morality. It involves also the guidance of each individual in such industrial exercises as would give

them a knowledge of household or of agricultural work. This system of education begins by creating a home for the homeless, and seeks to develop a love for it by inculcating sentiments of fraternal and filial obedience, by devising and promoting true family relations, and by undertaking to influence each and all of its members to habits of thrift, sobriety, reverence, and integrity in daily living.

When every mitigating circumstance is brought forward and every excuse rendered, we are still justified in saying that the neglect to plant and maintain efficient schools in the rural districts of the South was a stupendous blunder, which falls little short of crime. The country grows the strongest, and in most respects the best, examples of negro character. The rural freedmen bred in illiterate simplicity constitute the bone and sinew of the race. They are docile in habits and responsive to instruction; they represent the virile germs of the race's development. But life to them is a serious problem, which begins in hope and ends in despair. From dawn to dusk a surfeit of ignorance, a want whose insatiate greeds are never appeased, confronts them. Their vocation now is plantation labor, and for ages to come they will constitute our brawny toilers in subtropical fields. But the great body of them live and die shut out from any intelligent training in schools or churches, and in complete isolation from those external forces everywhere required to lift mankind out of darkness into the clear sunlight of truth and righteousness. Every



instinct, therefore, of humanity and common sense demands that the plantation freedmen, whose multitudes constitute the great body of the negro people, should be trained in mental and industrial efficiency. Nor will permanent results ever be achieved in any attempted amelioration of their condition, unless they are sought in country life. The negro school which in pursuance of these suggestions shall be the first to forego its Northward quest for precarious support, and found homes and impart knowledge to the rural freedman, will thereby lay up for itself a wealth of revenue that will make it the most powerful factor for negro development in the Southern field.

Many years have passed since reconstruction set in motion the machinery of popular education. The freedmen were then eager to get knowledge, but are now indifferent to learning because the methods employed have neither reached nor interested the majority of that people. Three decades ago, when the negro, then a physical and illiterate mendicant, overwhelmed with credulous benightedness, was begging for the bread of common understanding, we built universities and fettered his feeble brain with moth-eaten hieroglyphics. To-day, after he has toiled through one generation of industrial servitude without making serious headway, we are making puerile attempts at his industrial development, much after the same manner that mistaken, but doubtless well-meaning people, are teaching millinery and lace-making to blanketed Indian women. Some people are

prone to ask of what avail, in either case, are these senseless fads? But from the dawn of freedom the negro has been deluged with false expectations. He was told that enfranchisement would make him a man, but he speedily awoke to that deception. He was told that education would lift him out of industrial bondage, but a taste of the fruit of the tree of knowledge has merely opened his eyes to the bitterness of his degradation. He is now told that industrial training in schools will transform the race into trade artisans, and that through industrial strife will come the redemption of the freed people. But this mirage of golden expectations is doomed to fade away, just as the others have done. It is not external, but internal, development that the negro needs.

## CHAPTER X

### SOCIAL RIGHTS

ABSOLUTE human rights are those of personal liberty, of personal security, and the unquestionable right to think, speak, and act according to the dictates of an enlightened conscience. Growing out of these fundamentals are numerous subdivisions of rights, such as legal, civil, and social rights, the latter of which we shall now consider. Social rights cover a wide field, and include both absolute and conferred rights. Even in the restricted sense in which we shall deal with this subject, it takes in such common law rights as that of contract, compensation for labor, the purchase and sale of real and personal property, transit by public conveyance, admission to public places of amusement or instruction, together with all expressed or implied social rights inherent in public franchises, created under authority from the states, and carried on by individuals or corporations for public service. In setting forth these well-established principles as correct definitions of social rights, we do not mean to imply that public carriers and other servants of the people have not the inherent right to make such regulations regarding the manner and method of rendering such ser-



vice — so long as its quality is unimpaired and free from individual discrimination — as will best subserve their corporate or individual welfare.

Social rights and personal association are sometimes inextricably confounded in the popular mind. The two, however, are wholly distinct from each other. Social rights are universal franchises, and relate entirely to public privileges. Social intercourse, on the other hand, is an inherent and personal prerogative, in no wise amenable to municipal regulation; it may, therefore, be indulged in or not, just as individual tastes determine. Municipal law, then, has no right to say who shall or shall not consort together; first, because it would be of no avail where individuals were strongly attracted toward, or repelled from, each other; and secondly, because any law permitting, or restricting, social intercourse, is an obvious invasion of primary individual rights, inasmuch as choice of association, as well as option of religious belief, are, for adult people, God-ordained functions. Hence, any infringement of privilege inherent in either social rights or personal association by municipal law or social custom becomes an inexcusable act of tyranny. Any and all races have the right of unrestricted social intercourse, either as individuals or communities, whenever and wherever reciprocal sentiments prompt such intercourse. Social freedom always carries with it the right of social union. Hence, where persons of opposite sexes or races, of their own free will and choice, seek to enter

into conjugal relations, municipal restrictions have no right to interfere, either by forbidding such marriages or by annulling them after consummation.

We have already remarked that men will select their associates despite civic regulations, and that municipal functions are supereminent whenever any attempt is made to separate races or create class distinctions by organic authority. In thus enunciating these principles of social intercourse, we are not contending for such an abrogation of all municipal oversight as would supplant liberty with license. Such conclusions would be far astray from our meaning. Social affiliations are, as we have said, the outcome of personal desire for congenial association, and in so far as individual commingling does not endanger the welfare of the state, as where the vicious undertake to seduce the virtuous members of society, the right of private judgment in accepting or declining overtures for social intercourse, and in contracting or severing individual friendship, is supreme. What, we may ask, are the functions of the municipality in dealing with its members, if not to protect and conserve their public and private rights? Among the latter, is not the inviolability of private life to be placed first and foremost? Do not the peace, security, preservation, and integrity of the social organism rest on the great magna charta of personal liberty, which declares "A man's house is his castle," and which, so long as the occupant is not answerable to processes of law, he may defend

against all comers? At its threshold all public surveillance ends, and its master alone has the right to say who shall enter and who shall remain on the outside.

We have been at some pains to state these well-known elementary principles of social intercourse, in order to show how ineffectual would any municipal mandate prove which undertook to compel social intercourse among races or classes fundamentally antagonistic, or to forbid the association of a people affinitively related. Under normal conditions of social development these abstract principles apply to both white and black social intercourse. Negroes have no just ground of complaint against the white race for refusing to associate with them, nor have the whites any right to force their society on the blacks. In all cases social intercourse should be free and untrammelled. These statements will also assist in preserving accurate distinctions between public and private intercourse, for the bugbear of negro social equality has stood in the way of many just and equitable measures affecting the freedmen.

We shall add a word to what has already been said regarding co-race intercourse. It is evident to any observant person, that in any Southern community of blacks and whites there is more of absolute social equality and personal freedom, in the intermingling of the races, than has ever obtained in the North, where, in the main, the public social rights of the negro are respected, but against whom pronounced



caste distinctions are applied in private intercourse. We are, therefore, of the belief, that, should wealth, culture, and character come to the great body of the negroes, all traces of race prejudice would disappear from our Southern section as effectually as it has been obliterated in Portugal and the Latin-American countries. In that event, the members of each race would be attracted toward the other by a parity of social development, and their difference in color would be merely an accident of contact, without becoming a factor of separation.

We have indicated what social rights and social intercourse are, and in what respect they differ from each other. We shall now attempt to show how social rights may be nullified and abrogated altogether through social prejudices. Personal likes and dislikes are amenable to no authority save that of individual judgment and conscience, and may be well founded or superficial in their conclusion. The most pronounced prejudices of mankind grow out of their social, legal, political, and religious distinctions. Social prejudices may be racial and national, though there will always be found individual members of a proscribed people who are exempt from its operations. Municipal law is powerless to eliminate personal prejudices, nor is any attempt made in that direction, though the principles of our civic institutions are arrayed against racial distinctions and class legislation. Neither this, nor any other, government is founded on principles embodying purely abstract

human rights. Governments are not sentimental affairs, but practical organizations, created for specific purposes, in the interest and for the welfare of the whole body of those who constitute their inhabitants.

So far as the social rights of the freedmen are concerned, the following is our position regarding co-race intercourse under normal conditions. Negroes are citizens of the United States, and as such they have, in common with all other citizens, a right to the enjoyment of all public privileges created and maintained by the state. We are aware that a widely different view was taken of this subject in the earlier stages of American development, and that legislative attempts were made to control the social rights of this people,—in much the same way that some of the early colonies undertook to supervise the religious beliefs of their citizens. At that time laws were in force which forbade public social interminglings of the blacks and whites, and prohibited with severe penalties their intercourse in public conveyances, schools, churches, hotels, and theatres. There was a time when not one of the older states was free from legislation imposing barbarous and execrable distinctions on its black citizens. Happily, the force of enlightened public sentiment has swept away most of these odious restrictions, with the result that where public rights are accorded to our several classes of citizens, such commingling does not excite the slightest friction, nor provoke the least invasion of private rights.

Much useless ado has been made over the caste legislation of the South, by persons who have only a superficial knowledge of the conditions which obtain in that section. On the face of it such legislation has the appearance of being harsh and extremely unjust. This in fact it is, to a large and intelligent body of our freed citizens. But on closer inspection it will be seen that there are sound reasons for imposing discriminations in a region where diversity in the social development of its classes is so complex as to forbid unrestricted intercourse. Moreover, however justly our indignation may be aroused at the sight of such barbaric remnants clinging to our civilization, we ought not to forget that scarcely a third of a century has elapsed since negroes were compelled to ride on the outside of coaches and street cars, in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, the present centres of American culture and civilization. To a much later date they were rigorously excluded from the hotels and restaurants of these cities, and are to-day debarred from renting or buying houses in their more respectable localities. The conduct of our Southern white neighbors toward the negro is open to grave criticism, but sober reflection shows that neither North nor South has a monopoly of social justice for its weaker members, though it is evident that the freedmen get more of the essentials of life in the latter section than in the former.

The fundamental objection, however, which may be urged against Southern social injustice is, that in



making color the sole criterion of racial distinction a crude and illogical standard is adopted. Obviously, mental and moral character are not determined by physical accidents, and in every well-ordered community these two qualities are the only recognized endowments of manhood and womanhood. It is no justification for the present condition of affairs to plead that the laws are impartial in operation, and effect both white and black alike. Such restrictions are infringements upon the rights of American citizenship, and impose restraints to which neither white nor black men ought to submit. The separate car law is a fair sample of the legislation we are discussing, and of which it is but fair to say that the end which the legal authorities appear to have had in mind was the separation of the orderly from the disorderly members of society. In so far the intention was good; but basing the separation on color does not accomplish that end, since all of one color are assigned to a designated car, and, through arbitrary methods, the intelligent, the refined, the well-dressed, and well-behaved passenger is forced to occupy the same seat with the vulgar and dissolute, — a condition of affairs equally disagreeable to white and black women travelling alone, and one which often leads to unpleasant results.

A more logical method would be to have, on every railway, first and second class carriages, and to allow all persons, regardless of color, to select that mode of conveyance most in consonance with their means,

taste, and behavior. It is reasonable to assume that, where such regulations existed, the objectionable element would, as a matter of preference, take the cheaper rate. When that is not done, discretionary power should be lodged in the hands of the ticket-seller and conductor to make such changes as might be necessary for the peace and security of self-respecting travellers. This plan, in our judgment, offers a solution of the problems growing out of conditions of Southern race intercourse in railway travel, and it is one we have repeatedly suggested to those in authority. It is also gratifying to state that quite recently the railroads of the Southwest, as well as some in the South, have adopted a second-class passenger rate. This marks a step in the right direction, although such rate has not included all the features here indicated.

The separate coach law, as instituted by the several Southern states, explicitly provides for equal accommodation and service for both races. Nevertheless, under its actual operation, vastly inferior cars are furnished to the freedmen. Railway authorities are opposed to these restrictions, though not so much out of sympathy for the negro as for the fact that they entail an additional and wholly unnecessary outlay in running expenses. There is ground for the suspicion that in many instances dilapidated cars are set apart for the freedmen with the purpose, and in the hope, that public sentiment may be aroused and may lead to the abrogation of this law, as well as to other desired

changes in railway legislation. We were speaking once of this matter to a prominent Southern governor, and he said to us that he saw the injustice to which the travelling negro was subjected, and had repeatedly urged the representative freedmen of his state to call his official attention to the discriminations which the railroads practised against them; but as no amount of persuasion would induce them to take the matter up, he was powerless to interfere. He further gave it as his opinion that, so long as greed for individual notoriety and personal gain actuated the leaders, there was not likely to be any substantial movement set on foot for race amelioration.

We confess that our knowledge of the freedmen induces us to coincide with these views. It is not to be denied that negroes are unjustly deprived of many of their legal rights. But an acknowledged universal subjection to common disabilities has neither woven a bond of mutual sympathy nor created affinity or coherence among them. Instead of finding unanimity of sentiment and combined action for the overthrow of race oppression, we merely discover individuals here and there endeavoring in a clandestine way to secure recognition from the dominant forces of society. So far as the mass of the freed people are concerned, they are not reckoned in any scheme which their accredited leaders have concocted, nor is the ordinary negro spokesman to be regarded as a trustworthy exponent of race needs and wants; he is not enamoured of the literal truth, either as it



affects himself or his people. Perhaps we ought not so much to wonder that these things exist, as that they are not more widespread among a people who were yesterday slaves, — a span by far too short to have rid them of inbred defects, either of mind or rudimentary character.

There is a world-wide difference between caste distinctions and race prejudice. The strongest caste systems are erected within homogeneous colored races, the most pronounced being among people of the same hue ; as, for example, in India. Caste, however, as understood in the Eastern world, is a social division of society, which separates and classifies into hereditary groups the functional capacity of its members, and is wholly a civic arrangement.

The Aryan race by the genius of its endowments is fundamentally grounded on class distinctions, the basis of which rests, not on color, but capable well-doing. Capable well-doing is the standard of race efficiency, and around it are ranged those distinctions which separate wealth from poverty, intelligence from ignorance, industry from idleness. These tests of racial efficiency are not doubtful standards, but clear, unequivocal gauges of the merits of men's endeavors measured by an adult standard of inexorable exactness. As childish performances are never subjected to other than an adolescent criterion, we are enabled to discover, with impartial exactness, the manly races or childish races and individuals of our composite organism, and give them distinctive groupings.

It will therefore be seen that the essential features of a caste system are in vogue among us, and functioned with as great a cleavage of classes as obtains elsewhere. Yet our class segregations are neither hereditary nor permanent in operation, for the reason that we divide our social forces into achievers and non-achievers, and group them according to their mental, moral, and industrial capacity. But, while no man can pass from the non-progressive to the progressive class until he achieves substantial success in endeavor, the way is always open to all of every hue. Nor are these caste requirements segments of prejudice,—which after all is merely a prejudgment formed from insufficient data, and in a candid mind liable at any time to revision and reversion. That of which we are speaking is more than personal bias and greater than mere opinion. It is a law of growth, the criterion of development, which the Occidental world has set up for its guidance, and to which all human activities within its purview must conform.

A predominant idea among us is that, in both ethical and social life, equal opportunity should be given to every one to exercise his best endeavor in the strife which attends human activity. There is a fundamental and vital difference in men, but such differences are not to be accounted for on any physical basis. Only the puerile judgment of an inferior people adopts such criterions. Wherein, then, lies the distinction between nations and individuals other

than in a difference in possession of power? Even race antipathy may be founded upon legitimate causes and justifiable grounds. There is such a thing as righteous contempt for wilful degradation. Both custom and prejudice are to be respected when they involve something more than mere conceits, and behind each may lie fundamental principles of vast import to the well-being of society. Therefore, when nations or men steadfastly refuse to consort with inferior standards of right-doing, and stand ready to defend by force what they believe to be right and true, all sound minds regard their conduct as heroic and worthy of emulation.

Social bias, however, is not always the outgrowth of rational conviction or wise judgment. There are prejudices born of ignorance, whose inceptions began we know not how, but which are disseminated and perpetuated by unthinking acquiescence. Experience also shows that foolish whims may be as stubbornly adhered to as rational convictions, and defended with as great valor as courage is capable of. Personal prejudices may, therefore, be the outgrowth of a foolish fancy or of deep-seated convictions of truth and justice. Personal prejudices may take in a whole race of beings,—as our aversion to the Chinese of the Pacific Coast. But it will be found that intelligent human prejudices are rarely directed against physical qualities, and that the inciting causes are ethical, social, or political, and affect whole races to such degree only as they give a maximum or mini-



mum ground of offence. Caste distinctions and race prejudices are not coördinate terms. Caste distinctions may exist in full force and effect where race prejudice is largely wanting. In this country we have an abhorrence of legal caste distinctions, nevertheless, we tolerate class segregation and foster race antagonisms to a degree that ill comports with our republican institutions.

Some observers claim that race prejudices are fundamental characteristics of human nature, and as such are ineradicable, especially where they originate in a conscious superiority on one side, and an admitted inferiority on the other. There are national prejudices arising from insulation and egotism; organic prejudices subsisting between monarchical and democratic forms of government; and there may be, as in our own country, sectional prejudices within the same nation; but none of these several phases of prejudice can be rightfully termed fundamental and ineradicable. What is true of masses of humanity is also true of individual members. Prejudices, then, of various shades and degrees extend through all the ramifications of society, and they are eradicable. We would now discover what of them are directed against the characteristics of a people, and what are superinduced by physical accidents; because, where antagonism is the outgrowth of objectionable traits of character, the elimination of objectionable traits is all that is needed to remove the opposition.

There is a plea set up among the negroes, and

reëchoed from without, that a color prejudice which is intense and unappeasable bars every opportunity and fetters every attempt at race development. Such statements afford no satisfactory solution of the question at issue. Where so many conflicting elements exist it is absurd to single out a particular prejudice and hold it up. Of course, some prejudices are more reprehensible than others, because they work a more positive injury to society. Such, for example, are those aversions founded on the involuntary accidents of physical life and based on personal appearance, whether of color or form. Apart from and above incidental distinctions of society there lies within the reach of each of its members the power to acquire character; and character represents the sum total of all that is excellent in human endowment.

When we consider existing phases of Southern social intercourse, the plea of fundamental antagonism between the races becomes mendacious on the part of those who enunciate it. The conduct of the white people toward the freedmen shows that race prejudice is not a fundamental quality of their character. They have always exhibited a genuine fondness for them in all relations aside from that of political action. As far as the freedman is concerned, it is broadly affirmed by those who hold the race in social subjection that the "negro is never so happy as when serving a white man," — an affirmation to which the cold facts of race experience give

color and credence, to set aside which something more tangible than the bravado of speech is needed. It is evident that no permanent racial antagonism can exist where good feelings are uppermost on both sides. Hence the plea of fundamental aversion to negro color and race must be set aside.

Social prejudices are not confined to color or races; they pervade all segments of society, and enter into all the ramifications of human life. Nowhere are they more intense and unreasonable than among the negroes themselves, who have established within their own ranks innumerable social distinctions which, strange to say, are based solely on color. For example, in many sections, light-hued negroes associate together, and hold themselves as much aloof from contact with the blacks as do the most exclusive whites. In fact, there exists among these people a graduated series of color distinctions, with the blackest constituting the base, and the fairest the apex, of the social column. But, though there is neither logic nor sense in discriminations based on variations of racial color, nevertheless these social antipathies of the freedmen are as pronounced in character and as relentless in effect as those which their most inveterate white enemies have shown. Of course, such grotesque pretensions to superiority as these distinctions evince indicate very clearly the low state of development of the negro's social condition, — which in every stage of its clamorings



for white recognition has utterly failed to realize that character and capacity are the basal elements that bring men together in fraternal intercourse.

But, disregarding the practical teaching of race environment and strangely blind to its real needs and wants, there are not wanting those who persist in the contention that, as color constitutes the barrier of separation between the races, an elimination of dark hues will open the way to cordial social reciprocity as well as immeasurably uplift the black people in character and capacity. Such statements are false and vicious. A mere change of hue will not improve the capacity of any race. Moreover, ignorance, stupidity, and immorality are as pronounced among the fair negro types as among the darker shades. In truth, many of them are weaker in this respect than their black brethren, nor does their light color have any advantage over black in sections where both are known and rated according to their actual worth. A yellow-hued negro is dominated as mercilessly as a black one, nor are his presumptions tolerated in any superior quarter, despite mixed race arrogance. The essential fact, overlooked by those who lay stress on the efficiency of color as a solvent of race prejudice, is that social relations are based on mutual attractions and reciprocal obligations. There is no other law of harmonious personal intercourse; and what worthy qualities, inherent or acquired, have negroes to proffer to their white neighbors?

Color, we insist, is merely the incident, and not the foundation, of prejudice. Ample verification of this is afforded, by the low class of whites who inhabit our Southern states, and whose condition is infinitely inferior to that of the lowest plantation negro, both as to opportunity for work, means of living, and social recognition on the part of a superior oversight. These people are white, and of the same race as their oppressors, nevertheless their color neither alleviates their distresses, nor furnishes an avenue of escape from domination. To decry their social ostracism as an ugly manifestation of human nature avails nothing in the face of the fact that prejudices of various degrees are subtly interwoven into the fibre of all people backed by pride of ancestry and achievement. We have the utmost contempt for every shade of vulgar prejudice, and for the conditions which evolve them as well. Yet we have profound respect and reverence for the distinctions which sort and separate the wise from the simple, the good from the bad, the capable from the incapable of mankind.

That white people have prejudices against the negro may well be admitted. But what of that? Do not all of us have our social antipathies? We may further venture to say, guided by intimate knowledge of the characteristics of both races, that, were their relations reversed, with the negro constituting the master class and possessing the endowments of the white race, and with the latter in a low

state of development similar to that of the freedman, the racial contempt and oppression which would follow would represent a much more accentuated and intense phase of experience than that which the negro has so far undergone. This conclusion is fairly sustained by the present attitude of the negro toward the poor whites of the South, between whom and himself there is an intense and wholly unnecessary bitterness, and with whom, had he been wise in his day of opportunity during sectional reconstruction, he might have established friendly relations. In that event, these two classes would then have controlled the South. The negro, however, had neither sufficient forethought nor sagacity to compass so sane an undertaking. He was blindly perched on an eminence of egotistical delusions, and made neither rational advances toward his superiors, nor comported himself with such discretion toward this class of whites as would tend toward the abatement of existing prejudices.

That race prejudices exist no sane man denies, but that color is the prime cause of American prejudice against negroes is not to be believed for one moment. Every shred of authentic evidence disproves conclusions so preposterous. Abstractly considered, black and white are negative colors, neither of which has any inherent superiority over the other. Whence, then, comes race prejudice? Simply through a concatenation of circumstances, by which black represents an enslaved, and white a master class ; and, as



a servile race is always a despised people, the logical and inevitable sequence of negro bondage was to create an aversion for black, not on its own account, but solely because it was the chief visible badge of personal degradation.

While it is true that the conditions of slavery dishonor the freedmen of to-day, as all servile debasement has done the descendants of an enslaved race, and while we cannot hope for their eradication so long as the prejudices which are superinduced by chattelism continue to be perpetuated by the crude endeavors of the negro himself, nevertheless, the obvious duty of the freedman is to conduct himself so worthily as to disarm racial antagonism. If he is a man, that he can do. If not, then he deserves to be pushed aside without pity or remorse. In this matter all that the negro can justly ask is opportunity to demonstrate his capacity for efficient service. Should he fail to establish his claims of equality with other races, he must perforce return to his subordinate conditions. Should he succeed, he is thenceforth to be enrolled in the ranks of the capable and efficient members of our social group. We are aware that, so long as black is a symbol of inefficiency, it will be well-nigh impossible for even the capable and worthy negro to escape some measure of the odium universally attaching to his people; and it may fairly be added that any civilization is defective in which injustice exacts penalty for the unavoidable incidents of color and birth. The common-sense conclusion is

that assumed limitations of a race ought not to shut out from recognition and opportunity its individual members of capable parts and original powers.

We fear, however, that the freedmen are not content to abide by the sober restraints of life, and to await a revolution in public sentiment through their own well-doing. On the contrary, we notice that the ever recurring justification for race inefficiency is the excuse that color prejudice is the bar to its capable achievement. By what process of reason the elimination of proscriptive social regulations will implant energy in the place of illiterate idleness, or convert imbecile folly into sane conduct, is beyond our knowledge. It is questioned whether the removal of proscriptive regulations will, or can, make an industrious man out of an indolent one, a capable mechanic out of a shiftless and careless laborer, or endow a man with integrity and prudence who is handicapped with a strong desire to evade steady and sober endeavor.

The truth is that negroes have not yet realized that their inefficiency is due to fundamental and inherent traits of character in no wise related to external conditions. Nor do they comprehend that the eradication of such characteristic defects is the one thing needful before they can hope to secure recognition and place among the efficient forces of society. There is more or less clamoring on the part of the freed people for the privileges which the white people enjoy, yet, when the way is open, they seldom avail themselves of the opportunities to any such extent

as would indicate a profound appreciation of the benefits conferred. For instance, there are sections of the United States where unlimited social and civic freedom is enjoyed by all classes, but where the condition of the negro is not one whit superior to that of parts where his race is denied such privileges. We may therefore conclude that it is self-conquest of which the negro stands most in need, together with such an endowment of capacity as will compel recognition in the most reluctant quarters.

We are a heterogeneous people, and any honest facing of the situation shows that caste distinctions and social prejudices are pronounced factors in every phase of American life ; though it is equally obvious that neither is an ineradicable trait of our civilization. Under such conditions, it is not strange that prejudice against negroes is a social fact. In so far as it is directed toward their color the negroes have solid ground for complaint. Nevertheless, in protesting against wrongs, it behooves them to discriminate between their absolute rights and permitted privileges. The negro has a God-ordained right to protest against his exclusion from means for self-support. He has equal right to protest when deprived of legal and civil justice, or when the opportunity to knowledge and sober living is denied him. He has no just cause of complaint, however, when excluded from social intercourse with the white race for the obvious reason that mankind does not mingle on terms of social equality, — a fact as true of black men as of



white. Nor is negro exclusion from membership in white churches a trespass on race rights, for, after all, a church is neither more nor less than a social family.

What all mankind has a right to demand and possess, is freedom of opportunity for self-development. Neither the superior social or civic forces of society have a right to fetter uplifting human activity. Furthermore, all social rights ought to be respected. Savagery, ignorance, is the wild play of misdirected energy; civilization, knowledge, is the fruitage of endeavor, — and endeavor is not the property of a specific color, but is independent of all color. Despite existing social conditions, we are sanguine enough to believe that the time will come when race discriminations will cease; for the highest freedom is always possible where full discussion of fundamental principles is untrammelled, and where opportunity for intelligent activity is unfettered. That is what really obtains in our American commonwealth.

## CHAPTER XI

### ENFRANCHISED FUNCTIONS

THE status of citizenship is vested in all persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to its jurisdiction. The first authoritative definition of American citizenship was contained in the Fourteenth Constitutional Amendment, which made all individuals, in any state or territory of the Union, who came within its prescribed definitions, American citizens owing direct allegiance to Federal authority. Before that amendment was adopted, there was no common standard; citizenship was a local institution, and determined by the laws of the several states, hence a person who was a citizen in one state might be an alien in another. But by virtue of that amendment, every inhabitant born or naturalized in the United States, in becoming Federal citizens, acquired citizenship in any particular state in which residence was made. This amendment wrought a sweeping revolution in the status of citizenship, which was not fully grasped at the time, and whose significance is by no means generally apprehended now. It was this amendment which conferred citizenship on the American negro, North and South. By one of its sections provision was made for restricting the represen-

tation of a state when persons were denied suffrage. The obvious intent of this section was to limit congressional representation to the actually qualified voters of the several states. Negroes were not then entitled to vote. They had, as slaves, added three-fifths to the Southern representative apportionment, and would, as citizens, increase the congressional representation of that section two score.

To understand the effect of the acts which grew out of our war legislation, it is necessary to advert briefly to some of the causes which led up to them. The possible dissolution of the Union had been uppermost in men's minds from the adoption of the Constitution. The possible severance of allegiance was the attitude of Virginia in 1799; also later of Kentucky, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. It was preëminently evidenced in the far-reaching plot of Burr to form an empire in the Mississippi Valley. Even New England, with Massachusetts in the lead, showed an inclination in this direction, in the Hartford Convention of 1814. We may say that the conception of a single supreme sovereignty which should be a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," had no existence in the mind of any one in the early days of the nation. Popular sovereignty was, therefore, an inconceivable possibility. The nearest approach to it was the town meetings of New England, and these institutions of local self-government were ill-equipped to grasp the profound significance wrapped up in the idea of a supreme



authority, created by individual assent, and exacting loyalty to the exclusion of local interests and sectional prejudices. Sound notions respecting the nature and functions of a federal government were impossible to incongruous, isolated colonists, deeply rooted in local prejudices. The fact is that, from its creation to the close of our civil strife, the Federal government was viewed by all classes with all the suspicion that attaches to foreign control. Fraternity of states and national loyalty were unbudded plants, that had no flower and fruitage until strife and bloodshed brought men to see that friendship and unity were better than hate and separation.

Before their rebellion the seceding states were civic organizations, owing official allegiance to the Union, and amenable to Federal control. The citizens of the several states held, in a primary sense, allegiance to their several states, and only through their civic relation to the state were they bound in allegiance to the Federal government. Consequently the rebellion of the state not only destroyed its organic relations to the Federal government, but carried its individual citizens, except such as gave their allegiance directly to the Federal government, outside of all national civic rights. Logically speaking, then, though the secessionist was an inhabitant of Federal territory when the Rebellion ceased, he was not a citizen, but in every sense an alien subject. The severity of these conclusions, while not stated in express terms, was fully borne out by the attitude of Congress in

dealing with Southern reconstruction. The official declarations of our Federal legislature and judiciary were that their rebellion had destroyed the former organic and legal status of the states in regard to the Federal government. To be sure, no physical territory was alienated or destroyed, — that was still within, and the property of, the nation; but the former municipal organism to which the inhabitants of such territory were in subjection was obliterated. Therefore, in the absence of any recognized legal government, and in pursuance of the mandate of the Constitution to provide a republican form of government for each state, it was held that Congress had the undoubted right to prescribe the form and method by which new municipalities should be organized.

It is not our purpose to present a history of the steps which led to the conferring of suffrage on the freedmen and the enactment of the Fifteenth Amendment. For a proper understanding of certain parts, however, a brief statement is necessary. Eleven states had been in armed rebellion against the national government. When hostilities ceased, no provision had been made for the restoration of these states to the Union. Congress was not in session, President Lincoln had been assassinated, and the man who had succeeded him to the presidency, though at first disposed to resort to rigorous measures in dealing with the Confederates, was speedily led, under the persuasive influence of Mr. Seward,

then Secretary of State, to issue pardons to many of the leading Southern conspirators. Guided by the same influence, he appointed provisional governors for the several Southern states, and directed that in each a convention should be held for the purpose of resuming administrative functions; the only conditions imposed were the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment and the repudiation of the Confederate debt. The consequence was that, when Congress met in December, 1865, each of the eleven rebellious states had, under such terms, effected a complete restoration of their state administrative functions, and had sent their senators and representatives for admission to the Federal Congress.

Congressional inquiry into the means and methods by which these events had been accomplished disclosed the fact that these state governments were organized, not in accordance with, but in defiance of, the expressed sentiment and policy of the nation; and especially was this observable in the attitude of these states toward the Thirteenth Amendment. It is true they had perfunctorily given their assent to that amendment, though, as was claimed by them, under duress; but they nullified both spirit and letter of the Amendment by such odious and inhuman laws against the freedmen as practically to reënslave the whole negro race. In fact, the laws for the control of the freedmen, enacted by the Southern states immediately after the close of the war, effectually reduced that people to a condition of helpless servil-



ity such as had had no parallel on this continent. It was this attitude of the South toward the freedmen, and the manifest purpose of its leaders to evade and ignore every requirement which the logic of events and national legislation had imposed, that finally awakened the North to the true intent and purpose of the South, and created a demand for the enactment of the Fourteenth Amendment. The ratification of this by the seceding states was made a prerequisite condition of their admission to the Union.

Previously, the political leaders of the South had defiantly rejected every congressional measure for reconstruction. They stubbornly contended that Congress had nothing to do with presenting terms to the late Confederate states for their reëntrance into the Union; and, fixed in this illogical attitude, they steadily held aloof from countenance or support of every step in Federal readjustment, from the inception to the consummation of the act. The rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment was the cause of the establishment of provisional military government in the South; through which government, according to the testimony of leading Southerners, law and order was brought to a turbulent people. Public opinion was divided as to the wisdom of enfranchising the negro, but out of the chaotic mass of reconstructive endeavors it was finally arranged that each Southern state should hold a constitutional convention, for whose members all loyal citizens, regardless of color,

should be permitted to vote. These events transpired in 1868. It was not until 1870 that the Fifteenth Constitutional Amendment was enacted. It will thence be seen that the freedmen were permitted to vote two years in advance of the time when most Northern negroes were granted suffrage, and only three years from the date of their actual emancipation.

The three years immediately following our Civil War was the golden period of white Southern opportunity. Had there been loyal acquiescence in the Thirteenth Amendment, the Fourteenth would have been long delayed. Had the Fourteenth Amendment been promptly ratified, the Fifteenth would never have been promulgated; consequently, negro suffrage would have been altogether eliminated from Southern reconstruction. Even as matters were finally arranged, with the negro a factor in the premises, the actual determination of the political situation remained in the hands of the white South. For the freedmen, dazed with their sudden transition to giddy heights and overawed by unknown responsibilities, turned to their former masters, and, with a spirit of self-abnegation from which they are wholly divorced in these latter days, implored the white leaders of the South to accept place and preferment at their hands. But they were spurned with contempt. There was no other resource but to confide in strangers whose pretensions of disinterested service had won their confidence. Under such conditions state control

and national representation passed into the hands of an alien white class, — an event for which there will always rest upon the white South the greater blame. There were some persons of conviction and patriotic purpose, to whom political activity was a fulfilment of duty, regardless of partisan results or personal gains. Such were those who put country before party. If political passion and personal selfishness had been eliminated in their endeavor, with a broad-minded statesmanship ruling the nation, the latent union sentiment existing in all the states would have been brought to the fore, and the governments established would have been universally superior and of more lasting benefit to all concerned than those which were erected.

When the civil governments of the South were finally reconstructed, the white people of that section and their political sympathizers of the North sought to discredit them with the cry of negro domination. It was a baseless charge, but it served to arouse the worst passions of a masterful class. Its sole plausibility lay in the fact that negroes were voters, and held various subordinate offices under the new order of things. Southern reconstruction marks the blackest page in American history. It is well that its infamies and crimes are fast sinking into oblivion. These facts, however, are to be noted for the purpose of showing the important part the negro bore in public affairs. The constitutions of the reconstructed states were framed by white men, under the direction



and with the approval of the best legal intelligence of America. The majority of state executive offices and the most important were always filled by white men. The congressional delegations were composed of the same class of individuals. The leading men in both branches of every state legislature were representatives of the dominant race, as were the chief county officials. These white men planned and directed the financial and civic policy of their several states. It was they who created a bonded indebtedness, negotiated loans, levied and collected taxes, disbursed revenues, and therefore they, and they alone, were responsible for the good or evil wrought by a government of unique exigencies. The negro had a place in this nondescript scheme, but his place was that of registering factor of the schemes of white men whom he blindly trusted, and for whose culpability he is now vindictively execrated.

The odium attaching to Republican government in the South during the period of reconstruction is unjustly laid at the door of the negro. His ignorance, inexperience, and utter incapacity for intelligently exercising the functions of citizenship are made the source of all the venality, speculation, and mismanagement that characterized these states at that period. We may easily admit that it was a caricature on manhood suffrage to invest with civic functions ignorant beings clothed in patches, sleeping in hovels, and scarcely one remove in intelligence from their inseparable animal companions of plantation life. It

would, however, evidence unpardonable ignorance in any one who said that the negro has ever been a factor in legislation or a force in government. He has in no instance controlled a state or county government, or even dictated an important nomination. He is now, as he was the first day of his enfranchisement, the partisan tool of designing white men. Nor does this fact alter, whether the negro vote in any given community is numbered by hundreds or thousands; a venial Southern white Republican is its recognized political master.

It will not exonerate those whose duplicity led the negro to ruin to plead that he is utterly lacking in sincerity of motive or steadfastness of purpose, or that he seems unable to discriminate between the true and false, either as to men or things. If it is true that he failed to discern between knavery and candor, falsehood and truth, it is largely because specious promises were employed to beguile him. It does not extenuate the culpability of white leadership to say that among all classes the strong rule and the weak obey. We grant it; but does it not follow that leadership implies moral responsibility and power? — personal obligation to do right? It was an unpardonable blunder to enfranchise the negro, but it is an execrable crime to hold him responsible for the misdeeds of those who were in every sense the actual leaders. It is the rankest injustice to shift the crimes of intelligence to the shoulders of ignorance. It is a perversion of every

moral instinct, an insult to every sense of right-doing, to welcome back and honor the Northern white knave who went South penniless after the war and returned laden with the spoils of reconstructive speculation, and at the same time hurl anathemas at the black freedman whose only offence lay in faithfully doing the bidding of those who were accredited to him as guides and friends.

Neither partisan bigotry nor race prejudice should ignore facts. Less than two score years ago we had in our midst four million slaves in dense illiteracy, without the power of self-guidance, and ignorant of every principle of civilization or government policy. In that condition they were emancipated, — an act that made men and women of chattels and citizens of serfs. When enfranchisement clothed the negro with the badge of an elector, he voted the Republican ticket: that party had not only emancipated him, but conferred citizenship and suffrage. What was more natural than that he should affiliate with his friends? True, he was not conscious of the dignities or duties of citizenship, but he was anxious to learn, and after a fashion did acquire a dim apprehension of his civic functions. Had he then been blessed with honest and capable instructors, their guidance would have made a strong and stalwart man of him. But his leaders, selfish and corrupt themselves, constantly used him to subserve base purposes. To secure his vote they excited his cupidity and inflamed his passions, but they never sought to train his reason



or calm his judgment. During a political canvass he was industriously sought after, cajoled, and petted ; at other times he was neglected and unknown. Of course, under such conditions the negro was easily corrupted. He saw himself simply as a political commodity, to be bought and sold to the highest bidder ; and he has been, and is, bought and sold in state and national conventions by men who pose as examples of integrity and champions of the rights of man. This is the political school in which the negro has been trained, and in which he has been corrupted by his friends and overawed by his enemies. He is a coward because he is a political parasite. He is corrupt because he is a partisan mendicant. Hence he is the scapegoat of every disorder, the culprit in every crime.

The Republican party is directly responsible for the political debauchery of the Southern negro ; and every national Republican administration, by its policy of appointments to Federal positions, increases party corruption in that section. Self-respecting men will not engage in the execrable scramble for office that follows the advent of a Republican President ; and the Republican oligarchy who constitute the several state committees, and whose chief functions are to select facile delegates to national conventions and procure offices for themselves and their obedient followers, are not apt to include such persons in their official list. Carelessness of the interest of the government and the welfare of the community will always

be condoned by national executives so long as their ambition for renomination is greater than their patriotism. It is because we have full knowledge of the Southern political situation that we do not hesitate to characterize the present system of making Republican Federal appointments in the South, whether the recipients be white or black, as offensive to every sense of decency, and wholly wanting in every element of political sagacity. It certainly represents the most degrading and debauching method of office distribution to be found anywhere in the United States.

These are no reckless assertions, but sober truth, well known to every reputable white and black man in the South. Such men will testify that within their own knowledge there have been hordes of negroes appointed to Federal positions in the customs service who were not only lacking in mental and moral fitness, but were so ignorant of common business affairs that, when named as collectors of ports or postmasters, they invariably required the clerical assistance of a white man to conduct their business for them. We have no knowledge of a single negro official at the head of either branch of the government service above named who, unaided, is capable of discharging his public functions aright. These men were not put in the public service out of pure philanthropy, nor from any affection for the freedmen; it is obvious that their appointment to responsible Federal positions is made with ulterior designs,

and chiefly as rewards for services rendered to the appointing power, either in state or national conventions.

We may state in this connection that we have knowledge of three negro office-holders whose combined salaries during their terms of public service exceeded \$200,000, but whose private lives were execrable. Their salaries were wasted in riotous living, and to-day all of them are penniless in means and bankrupt in character. We call attention to these examples to emphasize the fact that, had proper discrimination been exercised by the appointing powers, colored men of integrity and capacity might have filled these places, — men who would not only have saved their salaries, but who would have been, in character and conduct, a credit to their country and to a sorely beset people. It is a matter of common knowledge that many Southern negro office-holders have been guilty of scandalous deportment, especially those preachers who laid aside their pulpit vestments for official garb, and who, on account of their clerical relations, were in a position to do untold evil to the credulous blacks. It is not enough that negroes perform their official duties in a creditable manner. No man lives for himself, and these men, by their degree of efficiency, represent the capacity and honesty by which the race is judged. Hence cautious discrimination should be exercised in the selection of candidates and conferment of office upon the freedmen. That, however,



will not be done until it is recognized on all sides that they are still in a transitional state of development, and that only their best representatives in character and intelligence should receive political recognition and preferment. Since their emancipation negroes have been officially represented in every department of state and national government. This may not be generally known, and it is a pleasure to record that many of the elective positions which they have filled have been secured to them by the good will and suffrages of their white brethren. That they have sometimes discharged their duties in a modest way is not to their discredit, though in no particular case have they achieved distinction in the domain of politics or economics.

We have not the slightest sympathy with caste distinctions, and regard Southern race prejudices as an execrable exhibition and misconception of the spirit of liberty. As this prejudice takes form, negro office-holders are an offence to the white South. We should therefore exercise rare discrimination in making such appointments, and take only such as are qualified by the tact, experience, and knowledge of men that will render them welcome to communities. The appointment of incompetent negroes fans into flame the passions and prejudices of a people already overwrought in sectional feeling. Nor does it mend matters to say that negroes constitute the bulk of the Southern Republican party, and, as citizens, are entitled to representation in the distribution of Federal

patronage. That is true. Nevertheless, it does not follow that we should ignore existing conditions, and risk the alienation of one-third of the wealth and intelligence of the nation in order to bestow Federal endowments upon, at most, a few hundred. But there are not wanting instances where colored men have been appointed to positions in the Federal service in sections where a hostile race sentiment predominated, and who, by sensible demeanor and considerate judgment, not only effectually overcame this hostility, but in its stead implanted a discriminating respect for negro manhood. For in the South, as elsewhere, caste is dumb in the presence of unblemished worth and supreme efficiency.

In dealing with the racial problem, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that the representative Southern white man is bred to negro submission. He clings with stubborn tenacity to ancestral prejudices, yet his generous nature is quick to recognize actual worth, and from no quarter does genuine negro manhood receive more substantial recognition. We would emphasize this statement. The presence of negroes in large numbers in any civic organization will deter reputable Southern white men from affiliating with it. And, under existing conditions, no Republican party of character and efficiency can be organized in the South, and never will be, so long as the freedmen numerically represent the controlling forces of such party. The negro will not be tolerated as a party associate until he has something else to

contribute besides craven ignorance, — for such ignorance will never be permitted to dominate the courage and intelligence of either white or black American life. That we do not make progress in national fraternity, partisan affiliation, or race uplifting, by pursuing the method used at present, under Republican administrations, of filling Federal positions in the South, is obvious. Moreover, no change will take place until the ambitious schemes of selfishness are eliminated, and sound and wholesome principles integrated in government policy.

When it is once clearly realized that no white Republican party exists in the South, that individual Republicans are neither elected to office nor put in nomination, and that no Republican political organization is in existence in that section, other than that represented by a state executive committee, that which has preceded and that which now follows will be more fully understood. To be sure, east Tennessee, with its sparse negro population, is Republican. It would be strange indeed for a stanch Union stronghold during the Civil War to be otherwise. So are eastern Kentucky and western North Carolina. North Georgia was a Whig centre and might have been enrolled in the Republican column, had wise measures been taken during reconstruction to secure the allegiance of those hardy mountaineers. The same is true of north Alabama, and, in fact, of the whole mountain region of the South. There are sections where an occasional congressional district



breaks loose from its Democratic moorings, and, for the time being, elects a Republican representative. These partisan aberrations do not affect the general conclusion that in both state and national politics our Southern section is Democratic. But, while the Democratic party is supreme in the South, it is not because all of the white voters are irrevocably committed by conviction to Democratic principles and tenacious of partisan ideal. They are not. It is because all shades of political opinion centre in a common determination to dominate and suppress the negro vote.

The negro is the ostensible representative of the Republican party. For that reason Republican principles are not openly advocated by any considerable number of Southern white people. The policy which governs the selection of Federal officials under Republican administrations is a source of constant irritation to sectional sentiment and a hindrance to the growth of a white Republican party. But we are sanguine enough to believe, notwithstanding this, that a Republican party of high character and wholesome influence will eventually exist in the South. The first step toward such a consummation would be a discontinuance of existing methods in making Federal appointments; and were we in a position to take the initiatory we should institute radical measures, and appoint but few, if any, negroes to office in the Southern states. Nor should we appoint white Republican officials in stanch Democratic communities.

Starting out with the object of changing the political sentiment of the South, our first care would be to convince the broad-minded people of that section that the national administration was concerned for the welfare and wholesome development of the whole nation, regardless of existing political lines. To that end we should invite the confidence and active coöperation of that people by tendering the best qualified of their representative men positions in the Federal service. This proposition is not as chimerical as it may appear. Fully one-third of the Southern white people — many of whom constitute its representatives in wealth, education, ability, and patriotism — are of the class to which we allude, and are attached to sectional partisan organizations merely by perfunctory allegiance. Were they in the North, they would be enrolled in the Republican party. These citizens have political convictions and a healthy degree of personal ambition, but are without incentive to incur the ostracism which arises within an environment so hostile to Republican politics as is the South.

All this would be changed by the conferment of a Federal position. The appointee would be intrenched in power, and backed by a powerful government whose servant he had become. Patriotism would be quickened, partisan allegiance kindled, and a white Republican party would be speedily created of such formidable proportions as would justify, with reasonable assurance of success, a contest in every Southern congressional district. It should be remembered

that there are thousands of post-offices in the South which have not once passed beyond the control of the Democratic party since the war, for the very simple reason that there have not been a sufficient number of resident white Republicans to fill them, while the negro applicants have not had the financial standing requisite to secure the necessary bonds, even where they may have been qualified by intelligence to discharge the duties of postmaster. What policy could be more reasonable, or give a greater promise of beneficent political results to a Republican administration, than to confer such post-office appointments on the representative white people of our Southern section? Until some movement is devised by those in control of national authority that will succeed in enlisting the support of a large contingency of Southern white men in behalf of the Republican party, and under such conditions as will put them in control of local organizations, it will be useless to look for any headway in the matter of liberalizing the political sentiment of that section. One thing is certain, neither the men nor the methods which lost the South to us will ever regain it.

The ostensible ground of Southern opposition to negro suffrage will be found in the fact that the negro's ignorance and venality are dangerous in politics; and the feeling generally obtains that while his vote may, when necessary, be employed to defeat candidates of the opposition, nevertheless, the well-being of society will be profoundly endangered by



any unrestricted exercise of negro suffrage. We may agree with these conclusions, though we do not endorse the reprehensible methods resorted to by the ruling white South to carry them into effect. But setting up the scarecrow of negro domination is an execrable farce, and insulting alike to American intelligence and common sense. The negro vote never controlled the South, nor any section of it, and the wise conclusion is that it never will. To plead the fear of negro domination in justification of the unlawful suppression of the negro vote, not only concedes to the freedmen a degree of power and intelligence superior to that of the white race, but it breeds and fosters a lawless disregard of the constitutional rights of all classes. The true explanation of our sectional disorders will be found in the fact that irresponsible power over a weak people always debases a stronger, and, when long continued, makes the stronger cruel toward inferiors and perfidious toward equals.

No one will deny that during the reconstructive period the most revolting inhumanities characterized Southern white politics, or that negro men were murdered and the women subjected to atrocious torture in order to deter the masses from voting the Republican ticket. The pretext and justification of this condition of lawlessness was that Southern ideals were desecrated and its civilization imperilled by negro enfranchisement. But crime breeds crime, and the representatives of a later generation of Southern political intolerance

have wrested the weapons of black domination from the hands of the original victors, and against all odds won for themselves triumphant intrenchment in place and power. A loaded Winchester rifle in the hands of a resolute man is a potent factor in overcoming opposition, and a powerful instrument of political persuasion among both white or black voters. These atrocious political disorders of sectional origin were not sporadic outbreaks of overwrought partisan zeal, but the deliberate and fixed determination of a class for masterful control, regardless of the number and rights of opposing masses. They began with negro intimidation and are now employed in white domination. No man can foresee the end. But there is a growing conviction that the purity of the ballot and security of the voter ought to be maintained at all hazards and at any cost. American citizenship is a sacred trust committed to the keeping of candor and courage. The man who has been invested with the dignity of enfranchisement, and who permits another to deter him by threats or deeds of violence from exercising the rights incident thereto, is, in our judgment, unworthy of such privileges, and deserves to be stripped of such functions.

A common and altogether natural error into which the negroes soon fell after their enfranchisement was the belief that the Republican party of the North was securely lodged in governmental control, and that it was unreservedly committed to the maintenance of their political rights against their late

masters. This notion was industriously fostered by unscrupulous white and black political leaders, and there apparently existed good ground for the latter part of this belief. Federal troops had been employed to awe into submission rebellious outbursts of white discontent, and to protect voting precincts from the repeated assaults of white Southern cavaliers. The general inference was that Republican policy was committed to the protection and defence of a vast group of negro allies whom it had enfranchised for its own behoof. But when the crisis came these pretensions were found to have no existence in fact, and to the freedmen the fall from summit to abyss was terrific. Then came the rapid transitions and tremendous upheavals of reconstruction with its ludicrous caricature of government, its grotesque pretension and cravenness, its carnival of orgies embittered with strife and audacious pillage, its chapter of horrors, its swift retributions, and its ending in chaotic darkness. All this stupefied the hardly emancipated and poorly fledged negro, whom a legal fiction had set up as the peer of a former master. Small wonder then that, aghast at the spectacle, he crouched in dismay, and, overwhelmed with fear, hid in clumps of bushes and patches of corn and accepted an industrial servitude already in process of consummation and now complete.

In discussing Southern political disorders, much useless controversy has been indulged in by doctrinaires relative to dividing the negro vote of the country between the two leading political parties. It is



well to deal with this question with outspoken candor. The folly of the proposition for a division of the negro vote becomes apparent from a simple statement of the facts. As long as the Republican party was in power in the South the majority of negroes could be depended on to voice its behests. They had been identified with no other party, and not only did their personal preferences incline them to its support, but their latent animosity toward the whites kept them in partisan opposition. But with the breaking up of Southern Republican supremacy two conditions arose: the state government passed into the control of the Democratic party; a Southern aristocracy was again in the saddle, with the negro cast adrift without political influence or power. A majority of the Southern white people are Democrats and opposed to negro participation in politics. The vote of the race is not wanted in the Democratic party. There is not the slightest need for it in any state, and, with a free vote and honest count, it would exercise no perceptible influence on final results except in the three states where the freedmen predominate in number.

We are seriously inclined to doubt that Southern opposition to negro suffrage is actuated solely by pretence of the freedmen's Republican proclivities. For if negroes are Republicans and have the courage of their convictions, why is it that the largest Democratic gains are always made in the most densely populated negro counties? To that question any veracious answer must be that a ballot has ceased to

have sanctity in the eyes of the negro, who looks upon elections as a market wherein his vote is open to the highest bidder, although, even when the exigencies of partisan politics require an extra ballot, it is usually disposed of at a ridiculously low valuation.

Civil liberty and political equality were conferred on the negroes of the United States, and it is no derogation of that act of disenthralment to say that this people have not always placed the highest value upon their enfranchisement, nor wisely used the powers it gave them, nor yet acquired the strength to develop into their living nobility of purpose, as regards political conduct and other activities. They were for centuries human chattels, and were, without preparation or wise guidance, instantly swept from a state of servile control into the condition of freemen and American citizenship. It ought hardly to surprise us that their achievements are not a record of marvellous and unprecedented sobriety and progress. No people wrapped in ignorance and steeped in poverty, whose sole capital was unskilled muscle, could, in three decades, gain civic ability, it matters not how great may have been its inherent strength. Honesty, morality, and sound judgment are indispensable requirements for all classes of voters. But, in addition, what the freedmen really need to know, in common with others who undertake to exercise the right of suffrage, is that citizenship involves more than a perfunctory allegiance to the government, as implied in the act of casting a partisan ballot, or a

mercenary quest after office. It means faith in our institutions and loyal devotion to the ideals they represent. It means that a true sense of civil duties and relations must be drilled into men before they are fitted to apprehend the highest significance of their duties, or to unite harmoniously with others to perfect the aim and purpose for which our government was created.

The American negroes form a large minority of our national population. They are, in every respect, so far as legal enactment can make them, the political peers of their fellow-citizens; they are governed by the same laws, and invested, as others, with the rights to vote and be voted for. The South is the home of a greater part of them, and they thrive best in its genial climate. The great majority of them are a law-abiding class, responsive to humane treatment and submissive to honest government; and, as such, evince no desire to dominate in politics nor to put in jeopardy the material welfare of the South. On the contrary, their industrial activities are largely promoting the sound development of that section and its people. Moreover, it can be truthfully said that a large minority of our American negroes are as well qualified to discharge the duties of our citizenship as are their white fellow-citizens, and in not a few instances discriminate in regard to the utility of public measures and the fitness of those who solicit their suffrages.

That negroes have grounds for complaints is shown



by the statistical fact that the freedmen have, in the states of South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana, a majority of the electors. Such being the case, the logical inference is that these governments, which came into being through forceful and unscrupulous political methods, are perpetuating their existence through the same means. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what has taken place. A powerful minority has usurped the functions of a feeble majority, and, by the acquiescence of the latter, intrenched itself beyond dislodgement.

Human society, as Lamennais says, is based upon mutual giving, or upon the sacrifice of man for man, or of each man for all other men. The earlier French Republic, with all its blunders and crimes, was conscious of the fact that self-surrender is the very essence of political brotherhood. Though negroes may not be qualified to lead and direct public affairs, they should be allowed to vote and hold office under a system of co-race representation. For illustration, we suggest that in the states of South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana, with their admitted negro majorities, one-third of the elective offices should be allotted to the freedmen and filled by representatives of their own selection. The distribution of negro official preferment in the other Southern states should be made upon such a fair basis as would secure to them a minority of representation of one-fourth in official responsibility. This is not an unreasonable proposition, though it waives certain

legal rights with which the negroes are now fully invested. Nor does it imperil "white supremacy." It will eliminate the dangerous features of a festering problem, and remove from the white race their present incitement to perpetuate fraud for the maintenance of illegal control. It will do more. Co-race political fellowship will create mutual toleration and respect, and show that both the white and black people have a substantial and abiding interest in good government. If we aim to be a right-minded and God-fearing nation, why not have fraternity and justice and probity in government?

All Americans who put humanity before selfishness and country before party will agree with us that sectional strife and lawless disorder ought to end. The only excuse and justification for government is the happiness and prosperity of the governed. To that end the white and negro races of the South should at once join hands in peaceable and fraternal friendship, and, forgetting the past, unite in righting wrongs, social and political, that, if not righted, will sooner or later find expression in physical force and revolutionary methods. The fact that one race has achieved an evolution of character in advance of another set of men does not carry with it the right to dominate and deprive the less fortunate of the chance of future development. On the contrary, the evolved condition creates a social responsibility which governing classes can neither slight nor evade without positive social injury. This principle underlies

the whole fabric of popular government, for, notwithstanding a majority of electors may enact laws to which a minority has not given its assent, in all well-conducted governments legislation is framed with reference to the welfare of the whole people, and not in the interests of the party governing for the time being.

Mr. Gladstone says, "The basis of civilization and the first consideration of life is the free course of law, the liberty of every individual in the exercise of legal right, and the same legal rights for all citizens, both in statutory enactments and in its administration; and to this end there must be confidence in the conservation of justice and respect for law." This definition clearly sets forth what government ought to be, and what the existing government in the South is not; and it requires but slight discernment to realize that the disfranchisement of the Southern negro invalidates the potency of every Northern vote, and becomes an issue of national importance. This is a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," whose sheet anchor of perpetuity is personal freedom and the political equality of all its members. This compact is a heritage held in trust. Hence, so long as we cherish republican ideals in government, we are bound honestly to conserve the ends for which the nation was instituted, and whose highest mission is the welfare and betterment of American humanity.

A momentous change has taken place in the sen-



timent of the country toward the negro, and by common consent he is no longer a factor in Federal legislation. This is an age of materialism, wherein "the rights of property are above the rights of man." The North and South have joined hands for material gain; and as commerce does not thrive in an atmosphere of political acridity, the elimination of the freedman from national issues has been decreed. We do not acquiesce in this decision. Man, of whatever color, race, or degree of development, is above everything else, and, as Kant says, "He has no right to dominate others, all of whom are endowed with like reciprocal rights." Physically the negro is a man in common with other men. He has the right of self-defence, that is, of preventing any unlawful attempt at deprivation of rights, — not, however, as Hobbes puts it, by the "war of all against all," but by opposing right against might, within constitutional limits and under the sanction of the law. The right of petition, discussion, and organization are inalienable American privileges. Wherever oppression exists or rights are denied they should be resorted to, and exercised with such intelligence and persistence as to secure every right and immunity.

Because there has been no assimilation of the races, is no reason that the negro is not adaptable to our form of government, and therefore should be excluded from all participation in the functions of citizenship. All men are not cast in the same mould, and the gap between the whites and the blacks is

immense. The Saxon race measures character and determines conduct by the intellect; the freedman, by impulse and emotion. Nevertheless, the latter is not the only example in which sentiment has proven a dangerous possession to illiterate masses. We are altogether a nation of dissimilar parts, whose homogeneity is rift with unspanned chasms. A race problem involves one-ninth of our citizenship, and, notwithstanding the tentative efforts of a third of a century, it has neither been successfully solved as a whole, nor has a part appreciably approached a solution. We fear that the freedmen will never defend their rights so long as they are overawed and driven from position by mere threats of bodily harm. Their cowardice is evidenced by a passive acquiescence in the suppression of their votes, in districts where they outnumber the whites five to one. The negro, in common with others of our submerged classes, needs social sympathy, and ought to be accorded political tolerance; nevertheless, as the test of capable citizenship is the ability to compel a recognition of constitutional rights, he ought to realize that neither tears of weakness nor complaints of fear will vindicate negro humanity nor right its acknowledged wrongs.

The Constitution decrees that no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law. These declarations were formulated and ratified by sovereign commonwealths,

acting as representatives for each individual person within their control, and, for aught we know to the contrary, with the unqualified assent of all their citizens. So long as negroes were not citizens, nor denizens of the country, they were not entitled to any enjoyment of those rights, immunities, and privileges which belong to citizens. But when once they were admitted to citizenship their status was changed. That act immediately invested them with legal dignities and rights. But will any honest man affirm that there is not a disregard of both the letter and spirit of constitutional law, in its daily application to our negro citizenship?

The freedmen are first of all citizens of the United States, and, in common with all other citizens, owe allegiance, first and foremost, to the Federal government, to which both their citizenship and enfranchisement are due. By virtue of such citizenship and enfranchisement negroes have an inalienable right to participate in the selection of congressional representatives and presidential electors, notwithstanding the discrimination or exclusion of them by any state. We contend here for the recognition and enforcement of national rights,—rights inherent in all classes of citizens and deniable to none. Federal allegiance carries with it Federal rights and duties, one of which is that the national government should prescribe the qualifications of its electors. Nor would there be any anomaly in the fact that an American citizen might be a qualified Federal elector,



and yet be ineligible as a state voter. Nor is there any inhibition in the Federal Constitution to prevent any of the states from fixing the qualifications of state and national voters. We hold that Federal elections should be held under national scrutiny with the names of congressional representatives and Federal electors inscribed on a special ticket. Such ballots, when cast, should be deposited in a box separate from that containing the names of state officials, and placed under such safeguards and restrictions as would secure an honest casting of ballots, and an honest counting of them. Moreover, the United States courts should take cognizance of, and have original jurisdiction over, all controversies arising under Federal election laws.

Neither friend nor foe should forget that these ever increasing millions of negro citizens began their connection with this country in the character of involuntary emigrants, and were against their will domiciled on these shores. That they should elect to remain, in sentiment and patriotism, American subjects, is altogether to their credit; and, in common with others, they are justly entitled to fair and honest treatment. What greater service to themselves or the nation can the white people of the South render, than to supervise and direct the negro's political education, and by their superior intelligence and capable experience train him to intelligent action and responsible accountability in the duties and requirements of good citizenship, and to dispel forever

any apprehension of misgovernment through negro ascendancy? Finally, whatever else may be said or done, it is evident that social order will be our heritage only when the right of every person qualified to participate in governing functions is freely recognized and honestly exercised for the common good. Under such a sovereignty of the whole people, including a negro citizenship endowed with intelligence, independence, patriotism, and Christianity, the nation will realize its highest ideals.

## CHAPTER XII

### CHIMERICAL EXPATRIATION

WE have admission from all quarters that race friction exists. There is also universal agreement that the freedman has not measured up to the requirements of capable citizenship, nor made appreciable advance in the assimilation of national aims. Before going farther it is well to ascertain, with some degree of precision, the position taken by our white and black citizens regarding the cause of their disagreement. The contention of the whites is that the negro is a foe to good government, a menace to our civilization, and therefore ought to be excluded from active participation in governmental functions. To this indictment we understand the freedman to reply, that, though he is by the Constitution clothed with all the rights of citizenship, yet by reason of physical force and legal fraud he is effectually debarred from exercising enfranchised functions, and is shut out from the enjoyment of many of his acknowledged social rights. With the issue so joined, we turn to the negro, the aggrieved party, to seek a remedy.

But at the very threshold of the matter we meet with insuperable difficulties, and come to an overwhelming realization of the inability of the freed



people to construct a rational and feasible method of self-extrication from an adverse environment. Every one admits that racial disabilities exist, yet, search as we may, nothing approaching an agreement will be discovered as to what ought to be done. This, however, has been ascertained: Among the freedmen is an outspoken desire to escape from existing conditions. And while this has as yet assumed no practical form, there are those among them who have undertaken, with no inconsiderable success, to give specific force and direction to negro unrest; and by these it is asserted that, as the freedman is denied certain rights here, he must seek them elsewhere. The proposition is advanced that the negroes of America should emigrate to Africa; and though this is by no means an original suggestion, yet as it is the only tangible solution of the race problem advanced by its accredited spokesmen, its merits ought to be examined in the light of to-day's facts. We shall say in advance that the voluntary or forcible expatriation of the American negro is a physical impossibility. Nevertheless, in view of the existing undercurrent of racial unrest, and the disposition in some quarters to force the emigration issue into prominence, some of the main features bearing on African colonial settlement, so far as they relate to our freed people, will be seriously considered.

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In all wise movements, whether social, religious, political, or commercial, affecting large aggregations of humanity, certain preliminary questions must needs

be settled before any feasible undertaking can be inaugurated. We assume that, first, a purpose to conduct the emigration on a sound basis under adequate leadership will be definitely outlined, and thus we would ascertain what degree of unanimity exists among American negroes in favor of African emigration. As leadership involves responsibility and power, the question arises, What are the negro's qualifications for such leadership as a movement of this sort implies? It is an observed fact that negro and Celtic leadership is susceptible to the weakness of ungovernable desire; that both acknowledge but slight amenability to wholesome restraint; and that, in the case of each, inconsiderate zeal has wrought irreparable injury to the race which it represents. Moreover, any impartial investigation of the character of negro leadership as exemplified in slavery, freedom, reconstruction, and in education, morals, religion, industry, thrift, and intelligent politics, will not, in the sober judgment of mankind, evidence a high capacity for self-government. On the contrary, such inquiry will show that negro leadership, in exercising its authority, exhibits in all its ugliness vainglorious conceit and dominating insolence, and that in such follies may be traced the genesis of many of those execrable distinctions which now thwart honest negro endeavor.

The American negro, when in leadership, has not suggested, devised, or instituted a disinterested movement for the uplifting of his people, or advanced any feasible method of race coöperation, based on self-

reliance, individual energy, and industrial intelligence. For these reasons steady, sober-minded people have a profound distrust of self-accredited negro leaders, derived obviously from a knowledge and experience of their selfishness and grotesque performance. And as no evidence has come to light which would warrant the belief that any devisable negro government abroad could guarantee stability and permanence, or assure to its citizens equal and fraternal rights, it is reasonable to conclude that race segregation and isolation under these contemplated conditions will not uproot, but foster, the present elements of racial disintegration.

The administrative ability of the negro is to be judged by achievements wrought out in practical experience, through competitive trial with other races, and in comparison with existing average standards. Conspicuous examples of that which negro governments represent are to be found in Hayti and San Domingo. Neither of these constitutes what ought to be considered a stable, enlightened autonomy or an exemplary model of good government. Neither of them is in any sense managed in the interests of the people, for in each a state of chronic anarchy exists, and political uprisings are of frequent occurrence. The tendency of each of these negro governments is to dominate the masses through official surveillance; and, as speculations are rife, municipal positions are sought for personal enrichment. While a few are educated



millionnaires, the great body of the people are in ignorance and poverty, and the industrial serfs of black masters.

The island of Hayti is fertile to an amazing degree ; coffee, tobacco, cotton, and sugar-cane thrive, and produce enormous crops with the least manual effort, but no systematic attempt is made for their culture. The government discourages agricultural development as it does internal improvements in the matter of highways and bridges. Neither manufacturing nor mining is carried on to any appreciable extent ; and, while the island is full of undeveloped mineral wealth, not the least attempt has ever been made to utilize it for commercial purposes. This is true of all other indigenous resources. It may therefore justly be said that the two negro governments in control of the island shackle manhood, despoil womanhood, and grip the Eden of the Antilles in desperation and despair. Interminable strifes and revolutions attest a degree of negro incapacity which foretokens ill for racial administrative discipline and national development. Could it be otherwise when the common condition of the people is widespread poverty and dense ignorance, and their religion a barbarous superstition that perpetually riots in unbridled license and culminates in wretchedness ?

The British West Indies contribute additional evidence on this subject. The negro slaves of those islands were emancipated more than half a century

ago, and invested with absolute freedom in every particular. But to this date they have not shown evidence of possessing those moral or mental qualities out of which strong characters and solid worth are evolved. Take Jamaica, the largest of the group, with a land area of 4000 square miles and a population of 700,000 blacks and less than 20,000 whites. It has a salubrious climate, magnificent mountains, rich minerals, valuable woodlands, and a fertile soil prolific in tropical and temperate vegetation. Yet these abundant natural resources are neither developed nor garnered by the indolent negroes, who precariously exist in beggarly apathy, and with such constant reversion from civilization that to-day more than half of them are barbarous savages.

To the north of us the Canadas were an asylum for fleeing bondmen when slavery was in triumphant control of the United States, and well-nigh 100,000 escaping negroes found shelter and security there under the English flag. But, though endowed with unrestricted freedom and abundant opportunity, the earlier and later generations of them have held aloof from identification with issues of provincial interest. Neither parliamentary reforms, commercial reciprocity, colonial development, papal parochialism, nor their own careless indifference to conferred rights has awakened response from them, fully clothed as they are with all the attributes of citizenship. In this connection may be stated a singular instance

of negro apathy, — the rejection, namely, of an offer of allotments of public lands, made the Canadian negroes by the colonial government in 1837, which, put in the language of the negro leadership of that day, declared that, “Her Majesty’s free colored subjects were not paupers, and when they wanted land they were able to buy and pay for it.” It is needless to say that negroes have never become noted for their landholdings in British territory.

There should be justification for any proposed American-African colonial settlement; and what, we may ask, is the fundamental ground of negro disaffection with his American residence? To this question no conclusive answer is made. We are met by special pleadings, whose burden of complaint is that here the negro is constantly jostled by hurrying throngs, and trodden under foot by white rapacity; hence, in consequence, he dare not stand erect like other men. In setting up this plea the fact is overlooked that, while other races gather in the fruits of achievements, he lies at the bottom of our social organism expending energy in useless murmurs. Nevertheless, this in brief may be taken as the summation of negro disagreement with American life. To remove these social disabilities, he is advised to shirk duty by cowardly flight, to stultify himself by exile, and to entail upon his children perpetual debasement. The freedman is urged to this course, notwithstanding the fact that negro expatriation would be a confession of personal inferiority, an



avowal of inherent servility, an acknowledgment that the race is not by nature, training, capacity, or possibility, the equal of other American citizens.

If that be true, why go abroad? If wrongs exist here, exile will not right them. An African hut and a tropical sun will not create manhood, develop intelligence, impart industry, foster thrift, nor promote courage in illiterate, craven-hearted, shiftless people; nor will these physical agencies endue them with such transforming qualities of mind or character as will lift a confessedly inferior race to a plane of equality with American citizens. The plea is preposterous. No successful migration of a people was ever instituted by arrant cowardice. It must also be borne in mind that Africa is a far distant continent, whose inhabitants are savages, whose speech is barbarous, whose climate near the coast is execrable, whose plains are barren wastes, and whose forests are impenetrable jungles. It is to this wilderness that American negroes are invited to migrate, — a land without houses or roadways, shops or stores, factories or mechanics, agriculture or railways, schools or churches, libraries or newspapers, scholars or history, but one to which negroes have gone, and are still going, empty-handed, without money or skilful industry, knowledge or power. For what? To combat savages, to war with nature, to struggle with poverty, to live in disappointment in a savage Eden and die in despair in a sensuous paradise.

However, as neither the dismay of political revolu-

tions nor the ceaseless tyrannies of industrial bondage have loosened the moorings of the negro, we do not believe it possible for any agency to stampede him into African emigration. To be sure, there is in the race more or less despair of the present. Nevertheless, the clouds of oppression cannot hide the sunshine of a possible freedom. But there is not the slightest ground for belief that the sober sense of the people will now, or hereafter, commit them to any illusive scheme of negro government. Neither menace nor persuasion will induce any considerable body of our freedmen to migrate to the African continent. At the same time, since some negroes are foolish enough to go, it may not be amiss to suggest that in the future our African colonists should be a sober, God-fearing class of intelligent men and women, who go abroad for conscience' sake, and under the guidance of consecrated leadership. Under such conditions, we apprehend that but few negroes could be induced to leave this country.

In consideration of this African scheme, we must recognize the fact that, in all its ceaseless migrations, humanity has ever developed outward from the tropics, and in no instance toward them. Further, no purely negro kingdom of civilization and power has ever been established or existed within the historical period. The creation of an intelligently conducted negro autonomy is not probable nor perhaps possible. Are American negroes in their present state of development capable of intelligent coöpera-

tion at home or abroad for colonization or self-government? Proof must show superiority of character and ability in work done, where the negro is now domiciled, and where all the helps of modern achievement and accessories of white experience impart an incitement and advantage to negro performance far beyond anything possible in the African wilderness. If the negro has failed to achieve distinction when surrounded by the favorable conditions which obtain here, it is hardly to be conceived that the most credulous colonist will believe himself, or others of the race, capable of winning success abroad simply through bodily transference to alien soil. If the negro cannot thrive here, he will fail there. If he is now dominated by white civilization, he will then be submerged by African heathenism.

The fact that negroes are so universally thrust to the rear in every relation, and held to secondary lines of activity in every undertaking, may not prove their inherent unfitness for broader service, yet it does invite invidious comparisons, and raises presumptions of satisfied acquiescence in their subordination. It also leads to the inference that they have not sufficient inherent capacity to resist aggressive influence — a conclusion fully sustained by the slightest examination into the present social condition of negroid peoples. It matters little whether their domicile be Mexico, Central America, the Isles of the Sea, or the southern continental republics, nor however great their numerical preponderance, racial



inferiority relegates them to a minimum influence in public affairs. One may scan the globe, only to find that nowhere outside the United States have negroes attained to a commanding height of public recognition, and that nowhere else, despite obvious drawbacks here, are they treated with such uniform personal respect or political fairness.

Obviously, then, before the American negro commits himself to any scheme of racial migration to Africa, or elsewhere, he should demand of the advocates of such a movement some convincing proof of their ability to organize a negro nationality; he should have satisfactory guarantees of the institution and maintenance of stable government. Whatever evidence is submitted must have a more tangible basis than the apocryphal prestige of Africa as a mother-land, before any body of the American negro race should consent to expatriation, and embarkation on the broad sea of doubt and experiment. On the other hand, even if it were possible to bring about negro emigration to Africa, the undertaking would be without parallel in historic annals. It would be the dumping of a mass of helpless human beings on a barbarous shore, avowedly as instruments of native civilization and evangelization, but of whom the best that could be said would be that they were one remove from the aborigines themselves, and altogether barren of any uplifting qualities of impulse or character.

Soberly put, what has the American negro to offer

in the way of civilization, scholastic knowledge, scientific equipment, and superior resources, to the African people? Confessedly nothing. He is not great in music, poetry, literature, mechanics, commerce, government, or Christianity. His relations here are tentative in character, and enjoyed through sufferance. In the event of migration he would go to Africa handicapped by centuries of abasement, with the degradations of bondage and his acquiescent submission in freedom permeating every fibre of his being. Under such conditions of unfitness for responsible living the exported American negroes would readily succumb to the influence of their African surroundings, which means a speedy degeneration into spiritual paupers and physical beggars. But, not content with this declaration, we further challenge the feasibility and integrity of this scheme, by denying the ability of negro colonists, as an earnest of what they might do in their proposed African colonial settlement, to produce from their ranks a single useful invention, an example of clever administrative ability, a scholarly achievement, a competent mechanic, a capable leader, an efficient professional man, an exemplary teacher, or a man of sound discretion and integrity. Until some such earnest of competence is shown, it may be questioned if the promoters of negro-American colonization deserve respect. And of the scheme itself, considered either as a religious movement or as a commercial enterprise, it is obviously without justification.

To reach the core of this matter the following cardinal questions are presented, which the advocates of African colonization are invited to answer. We ask: Have they clear conceptions and accurate knowledge of the nature and magnitude of this undertaking? Have they perfected practical plans for negro colonization? Is the well-being of the freed people of the United States their chief concern? Are they actuated by disinterested motives and lofty purposes? Have they devised a substantial system of government? Would a government of their creation be founded on enlightened methods of representative citizenship and constitutional guarantee? If so, what would be their industrial and economic policy? Are contemplated colonists strong enough in morals and knowledge to withstand native influence and possible relapse into barbarous habits? Is not Liberia the fixed destination of every movement for African colonization? If so, is there not already a visible deterioration in the African colonists of that locality? In the event that negro colonization is undertaken, have they the means to meet the tremendous requirements of so unique a movement? Are they prepared to give immediately, or remotely, an equivalent in kind for what is surrendered here in the way of religious teaching, educational training, industrial opportunities, and the numberless other advantages that American civilization affords? Lastly, is not every phase of this movement a conglomerate of transcendent shams, instituted for the aggrandizement of individual selfishness?



We are aware that there are some negroes of honest intent but limited intelligence who seriously meditate going to the African continent with an expectation of bettering their condition. For the benefit of such, we will briefly consider some of the natural difficulties that await them. To begin with, Africa is environed by three oceans, and terraced by three physical tiers. There is the coast-line, low, miasmatic, and deadly in its poisonous emanations; then the plateaus, with their more or less disease-breeding dangers; and lastly, the mountains and valleys, with health and verdure,—the only habitable portion of the continent for an alien class. With these facts before us, it will be taken for granted that any colonial movement worthy of serious notice originating in the United States for African settlement would have for its destination an interior highland locality.

There are four not altogether impracticable ways of reaching interior Africa, each of which has been heretofore traversed under varying conditions of success. For obvious reasons, the North-African Sahara route will be excluded from the present consideration. Of the remaining three, the first and preferable mode of access is to enter from the West Coast, and follow the Congo Valley to whatever may have been the predetermined destination. The second is to start from some point in Cape Colony and go northward. The third is from an eastern entrance, say Delagoa Bay, and penetrate westward toward the lakes.

There must always be unrestricted access to the interior in every successful colonization movement, either by watercourses or by constructed or constructible roadways. The first method implies a fixed base of operations from an accessible seaport having safe anchorage for shipping, with advantageous inland transit and reasonable immunity from hostile forces ; and it also includes favorable climatic conditions for an inland terminus. But none of these conditions is likely to obtain in Africa, where all the bays, gulfs, and inlets of value are in control of European nations, and whose sea-flowing rivers, in breaking through the high inland plateaus, form cataracts which render them, except for brief stretches, useless for travel or commerce. As feasible highways they are to be counted out.

Land transit, the second mode of ingress, obviously includes some of the requirements previously stated. The possession of an eligible sea harbor, as a base for inland movements, is as imperative a condition of success in one mode of travel as in the other. In the event of a proper location for colonial disembarkation being acquired, the next step would be to survey routes of travel, construct roads, build bridges, and execute such preparatory service of other kind as would render it possible to move the colonists and their goods. A fair conception of what African inland travel is may be gained by bearing in mind that there are no roads already built, and that the land routes, such as they are, are controlled by hostile

and unscrupulous Arab traders. No really passable highways exist beyond certain well-known limits, and, in addition to the lack of road facilities, there are natural barriers such as swamps, impenetrable jungles, unbridged rivers, and trackless wastes, all of which, infested by hostile savages, immeasurably increase the obstacles in the way of approach to interior Africa.

But there are further impediments on the side of possible American negro emigrants. What do, or can, they know, at this distance, of the geography of the country, its specific temperature, its yearly rainfall, its zones of vegetation and their characteristic products, or of the tribal affinities of its mixed population, or of many other mentionable phases of African life of profound interest to colonial existence? It is not conceivable that the most ardent advocate of African emigration will deny that our American negroes are deficient in many of the qualities that go to make up successful tropical colonists. They certainly have no knowledge of irrigation, and no experience in mechanical engineering, both of which are imperatively needed by settlers in Africa. In fact, to speak plainly, they are altogether lacking in those higher endowments of mind and character required of any invading people, who would successfully grapple with the tremendous social and hygienic problems that await African colonization. Suppose, however, the most favorable outlook for negro migration to exist, and grant the possibility of such colonists reaching



subcoast or central Africa, still it is well to remember that our American negro is not only an African alien, but that he would undoubtedly be so treated by the natives of that country, who have no slight contempt for our freedman, and who could not regard him otherwise than as an interloper and usurper.

There are two social problems to be reckoned with in any proposed African colonial scheme; one is the slave trade, the other the rum traffic, domestic and foreign. Both are of significant menace to our freedmen. But in respect to the former we may observe that, even granting it were possible for any considerable body of negro emigrants to reach the interior of Africa and establish a colony, scarcely any restraining influence could hinder the Arab traders, were they so minded, or for that matter the native tribes, contiguous or remote, from enslaving them. Such a contingency is possible and probable, for, if recent intelligence is to be trusted, the African slave trade is not only unabated but is on the increase, and the report is that the Arab traders take nothing in exchange for their negro victims but firearms. That means a stronger intrenchment in merciless and prolonged control of the negro races. When once our colonists were dispersed by enslavement, from what source could liberation be sought, or obtained, even in the unlikely event that such indignities were reported to the outside world? Waiving aside the possibility of such a disastrous fate, it may well be questioned, what would be the final outcome in case

of injury to their lives and property? How could the nomadic perpetrators be reached or punished, and by what authority or tribunal? These are by no means idle questions.

It will be observed that in our treatment of this subject we have charitably assumed that our African emigrants had in mind the creation of an independent interior negro colony in some fertile and healthy region similar to that of the English in South Africa. But the closer the matter is looked into, the more firmly are we convinced that such impressions have no foundation in fact. A settlement among the negro tribes of the West Coast might be contemplated. But in view of recent disclosures that supposition is no longer to be entertained, although it may be protested by our negro colony zealots that we altogether mistake their purpose, which is to secure a concession of territory from one of the European powers. If such an intention exists, we may reply that strongest European nations exercise but nominal supervision over the native tribes of their alleged territory, and outside of their immediate vicinage of forts and garrisons they have not the slightest control of the native people. The partition of Africa is, no doubt, an accomplishing fact, though the boundary lines of the partitioning parties are constantly shifting. The grabbing and occupation of the continent is without the slightest basis of moral right, and is in itself an execrable manifestation of power and greed. It may be that, if the way were open to them, our negro

colonists would willingly become the beggarly beneficiaries of foreign rapacity. But, to speak frankly, no such undertaking has ever been contemplated by them, to whom all roads lead to Rome,—that is, Liberia,—it matters not whether the purpose is African emigration or evangelization.

The Republic of Liberia is perhaps the best example of negro administrative ability in existence. It is not a race creation, however, but owes its inception to a misguided sentimental philanthropy that moved some white Americans to provide an asylum in Africa for emancipated slaves, and who, had they been actuated by a deliberate purpose to exterminate the negro, could not have selected a more favorable spot for that purpose. We may, however, profitably ascertain what has been accomplished by this already established negro government, before reaching final conclusions as to the feasibility of similar African settlement.

This hybrid republic, a mendicant by birth and beggar by profession, has had a precarious existence for more than three quarters of a century. It has a disease-breeding climate, and for form of government a crude and grotesque copy of American institutions. Its makeshifts for churches are supported by American charity; its nondescript schools, by contributions from beyond the sea. Its capital, Monrovia, is made up of a collection of rude dwellings; its designated streets are open spaces, overgrown with grass and bushes, with not the slightest pretence of sidewalks,



street illumination, sewerage, or the least of those sanitary precautions which characterize the most inferior municipality of England or America. Outside of Monrovia, there are neither roads nor even passable footpaths; no bridges swing over its turbulent streams; no railway or other means of travel by land exists; and, save primitive canoes, crafts for water transportation are unknown. This section of Africa has a soil of tropical fertility, but no agricultural interest flourishes. It has rich and varied mineral deposits, but no mines are operated; no mill machinery is in motion or existence; no manufacturing has been started and no industrial activity is visible. Squalor, nakedness, indolence, and want riot and revel under a government of absurd pretensions steadily sinking into decrepitude. Of the people themselves, all trustworthy authorities are agreed that the American-Liberian negroes are an overbearing class, who have not exerted the slightest elevating influence on the native population, many of whom are in a state of industrial bondage to these colonists, and subjected by them to a rigor of authority and brutality of usage which the traditions of their former American servitude do not fail to suggest.

What a striking contrast the early settlers of our own country offer to those Liberian negroes. Our American colonists were poor in worldly goods, but rich in men and women surcharged with brain, brawn, and godly determination,—a people imbued with

prophetic inspirations and conscious faith in themselves. With saw and axe they subdued the forest, planted fields, built log cabins, and through sheer energy and intelligent foresight transformed a bleak wilderness into an inviting paradise. But while Saxon industry and courage are achieving their purpose, negro lethargy, Micawber-like, stands "waiting for something to turn up" in the way of donated relief. Herein lies the fundamental distinction between the races. This African-American republic is a visible type of that which any imported negro government is likely to be in that country. It is also an undeniable fact that Liberia is vastly inferior in every essential respect to many native negro governments. The probabilities are that it will eventually pass under English control. In that case its future will be more hopeful. But under present management, all the wealth of the British empire would not avail to make it a great or prosperous nation, so thoroughly is it honeycombed with ignorance and inefficiency.

We believe this inquiry has gone far enough to show that no negro government exists, or has existed within the knowledge of man, whose national character and inherent endowments are such as would justify its perpetuity or render it worthy of imitation. Nor have negro people, here or elsewhere, ever created an institution, devised a law, promulgated a science, formulated a philosophy, developed a literature, or instituted conditions of social betterment

that had the approval of contemporaries, or the respect of posterity. Negroes have been slaves in all quarters of the globe, and physical bondage is not a school which qualifies its subjects for the exercise of irresponsible power. At any rate, a people but one generation removed from personal chattelism are neither fit for self-government nor capable custodians of the rights of others.

There are some persons who are disposed to regard the sporadic migrations of the freedmen as evidence of deep-seated unrest among them and desire to change their abode. The negro is discontented. He is, however, wanting in the migratory instincts of other races, for, despite occasional roamings, he is content only in aggregated racial habitations of fixed locality and defined bounds. It is this characteristic which interposes a fundamental barrier to any scheme for African colonization, and to it is due the neglect of the negroes after their emancipation to settle on the public lands of the general government, of which, in the South alone, there were millions of acres open to public entry under the homestead laws of the United States.

The negro, however, is not without some experience in colonization in the Western world. We do not allude to fugitive slave settlement in Canada, for that form of migration was mainly individual, and in no instance rose to the dignity and importance of concerted community settlements carried on under organized methods. He has, however, made several abortive attempts at colonial migration. He has



gone to Mexico under the most illusive promises, only to meet disappointment and beggary. He has emigrated to the West, empty-handed and ignorant of the conditions of life which obtain there, only to find himself stranded and drifting back to his former abode. In each instance he failed to better his condition, because common-sense methods were left out of his reckoning. To both localities he went, not as a land-seeker and home-builder, or to become a creative factor in a permanent community, but as a crude laborer to a market already overcrowded with untrained forces. His migration was made impulsively and ignorantly, without one sane element entering into his calculations. That he should fail was, from every rational standpoint, a foregone conclusion.

Perhaps his most futile attempt at colonial settlement was that of the Haytian migration scheme which had its rise during the closing years of the fifties. This was a movement which duped thousands of negroes North and South with delusive tales of wealth and freedom, and led them to cast their lot with a people with whom they had no affinity, and from whom they could receive no succor when subsequent poverty and illness had reduced them to dire distress. Most of the negroes who went to Hayti afterward found their way back to the United States; and it is trustworthy opinion that ninety per cent of all negroes who leave the United States for Liberia would return could they find the means to do so.

We contend that the negro has not the capacity for any extensive scheme of migration. If he had, abundant opportunities involving little risk lie all about him. For instance, what better opening can be conceived than for a few like-minded and well-equipped freedmen to get together and lease land in some suitable Southern section and build up a community after their own liking? If there really exists any deep-seated desire among these people for self-government, such a settlement ought to be reckoned by hundreds and even thousands of families. An experiment of this sort, if successful, would naturally fit them for exercising greater civic responsibilities, besides exerting a profound influence on the political condition of freedmen elsewhere. In the end it might open the way for a widespread recognition of a desire to better themselves.

The dark-hued races of the Western continent, though of negroid ancestry, are in every essential respect Americans, and at best can have but sentimental attachment for a severed and obliterated lineage. It may be well doubted if unmixed negro blood exists here to any considerable degree. If so, it is unlike the African stock. Another fact to be considered is that, not only does emigration to Africa by American negroes sever perpetually those social relations and personal ties which bind them here, but it effects their individual expatriation. In event of their emigrating they will be no longer citizens of this country, and their maintenance abroad will

depend on their degree of adaptation to untried conditions in an unknown environment. Their civic relations in Africa will be determined in one of two ways: either by giving their allegiance to an alien government with a consequent subjection to foreign methods of control, or the creation and development of a distinctly negro autonomy. The latter event implies the existence of a considerable body of negro colonists on African soil, a concession of territory of advantageous location, with a government likely to be exempt from internal feuds or entangling complications with external forces. Since in Africa there are no indigenous civilizations or nations capable of contracting and enforcing treaties of reciprocal amity, the matter of extermination or perpetuation of any projected negro government would be decided by the strongest forces, whether it was confronted by native belligerence or foreign greed.

There is a well-founded impression that the work of race-uplifting among us has scarcely begun. That the freedmen are in sore straits, that universal poverty and universal ignorance are their chief possessions, no wise person denies. But, as a remedy for these conditions, the American-African colonial movement, as set forth by its negro promoters, is narrow in conception, crude in plan, and defective in detail, and in no particular invites public confidence. It conspicuously indicates on the part of its zealous advocates such meagreness of investigation and paucity of thought as to impugn the motives and discredit the statement of



those who invite a badly worsted people to so despicable an evasion of inherent duty. We are led to believe that negro colonization is led by selfishness and vain ambition; that its advocates are engaged in fomenting a spirit of unrest among the freed people in the hope of securing for themselves notoriety and pecuniary profit, and lasting escape from that wholesome development which American environment imposes and barbarous isolation annuls.

We are at the threshold of tremendous and far-reaching changes in our public polity, and at a point where no observant person can fail to see an approaching crisis in the problem of negro social and civic adjustment to American institutions. It is needful that the freedman should wisely bestir himself, if he would catch the spirit of the hour and share in its final fruits. However, lest there should get abroad in the public mind an exaggerated notion of the importance and magnitude of African colonization to the American negro, it is becoming now to say that the common people—the bone and sinew of the present, and the hope of all future race achievement in or out of church relations—are not moved by its lurid hyperboles and ranting fallacy, but plod on, minding their own business. Some of them are already absorbed—and in that lies the clew and key to the solution of the negro problem here or in Africa—in getting knowledge, buying homes, enlarging their resources, building up better lives, acquiring clearer perceptions of right-doing, and becoming

more closely identified in touch and bearing with the best expressions of modern civilization. They believe, despite the negro's degradation and oppression, that he is here to right his wrongs, to correct his mistakes, to train his intellect, to discipline his courage, — not for alien sequestration, but to the end that he may take and hold his rightful place in American citizenship.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FEASIBLE REGENERATION

THERE is a widespread conviction in the public mind, that in morals, intelligence, industry, and thrift the freed people are not what they ought to be. A difference of opinion exists as to the causes which have wrought the negro's present condition and the influences which perpetuate his degradation ; nevertheless, all sensible people are agreed that we have, in the case of the freedman, a complex and grave problem. We have carefully sought to ascertain what the negro was and is, before determining what he may become, and in so doing his miserable conditions have become apparent. The American negro is in a low state of social development, with no clear sense of his degradation or of progress from it. He is self-content ; with ideals grounded in his senses and excited to activity by physical causes. The negro is also in subjection to an inheritance, wherein the mental disposition, vocal expression, and physical action of parents are largely transmitted to their children, and in which there is a visibly entailed ancestral instinct for what is coarse, vulgar, and vicious in life. He is lawless by nature, and renders at best but perfunctory obedience to lawful require-



ments. His persistence in resisting transformation has developed a negro social status as distinctly distasteful as it is antagonistic to sound American aims and ideals. Therefore, with the degradation of the freedmen beyond dispute, and his redemption an unaccomplished fact, the question of his regeneration requires honest and direct treatment through sincere and well-intentioned methods.

The presence of negroes in the United States creates social conditions of importance to the present and future well-being of American ethical, economic, and political existence. That such conditions may in certain states eventually precipitate questions of supremacy between African savagery and English civilization is no idle surmise. Hence a question of immediate concern to the nation is, Shall the culture and achievement of the country be materially lessened through the continued indolence and imbecility of the negro? All historical experience shows that superior and inferior civilization cannot for a long time exist in the same social organism and be perpetuated in harmonious conjunction; one or the other will be overthrown and exterminated. The negro has nothing, in word or act, worthy of preservation. Each attribute of his being is obstinately and implacably arrayed against every influence that parts him from sensuous excitement; and when he gives to any uplifting movement verbal assent, he rarely translates speech into action. Wise judgment, therefore, decrees that negro pretensions ought to be suppressed,

and his evil propensities eradicated by every available means at command, even though such efforts should end in his virtual extermination.

Now, in voicing these sober convictions we are fully aware of the opportunities the negro enjoys in the way of intellectual culture and ethical training, his carelessness of which shows how improbable it is that negroes, brought up in low conditions of life, will voluntarily rid themselves of the promptings of their inheritance. We have ample corroboration of this conclusion in the condition of the three quarters of a million of negro people who live in the North, in the very heart of its civilization, and overshadowed by its Christianity. Many of these people reside in communities where they and their ancestors have dwelt for two centuries, and where they have enjoyed unrestricted access to the best schools, churches, libraries, and the other social and civic institutions of unsurpassed worth. We therefore have a right to expect to find in these people the highest and best examples of negro development that the race affords. As a matter of fact, some of the most ignorant and degraded of the American freedmen are among them.

No more conclusive test of racial incapacity could be applied to the negro than that furnished by the conditions cited. The recognized agencies of public improvement apparently furnish neither example nor inspiration to this people, who, contrary to every sense or reason, obviously shrink from contact with

strong, uplifting forces, and to every intent and purpose are wholly unconscious of the existence of any environment higher than their own. Nevertheless, for any sound determination of this matter, the examples furnished by Northern negroes are inconclusive. Not only have they been invested with qualities and credited with capacities they do not possess, but the essential fact has been overlooked, that they are not a self-governing people, and are as incapable of rational self-direction as children. There are those among both the black and the white people who spurn all past experience, and wilfully ignore present conditions in professing to believe that time will develop strong and stalwart virtues in the negroes — though time, in itself, does nothing but bring men to dissolution and decay. There is no surer way to perpetuate the freedman's degradation than by giving credence to such beliefs. All change and growth must have a beginning. The law of human regeneration is inexorable. Now — is the dividing line betwixt life and death.

No fact is more strongly attested than that of human flexibility in mental and spiritual states: a truth to which the sober conscience of every man bears witness. There is in each person a force that moulds and determines the characteristic bent of any and all individual life. By choice and will, any man can pass from inferior to superior groups, and the reverse as well. It therefore lies within the power of the weakest of human races to acquire strong



characters, broad-mindedness, and the courage to have intelligent convictions concerning truth and duty. The negro can be a man if he will. But in order to do so he must cease being the creature of credulous instincts that he is; he must lay aside at once and forever those habits of mind and character which justly brand him as an inferior creature.

The freedman, then, regardless of poverty or affluence, can begin at once to live an awakened and elevated life. He can be a man of truth and worth, by doing the best that in him lies, and when he has done that, an angel could do no more. There are, to be sure, a multitude of negroes who have neither ears to hear nor mind to heed these suggestions; but to the intelligent, the mere thought of such transforming possibilities ought to quicken the pulse and send the blood tingling through the veins. What amazing changes in human character will be wrought when men are brought to realize that all human regeneration, — moral, mental, physical, — is an internal process, begun and completed within the individual himself; or that other fact, that any man who yearns for a higher life can be true and do right if he so wills to do. But whether the freedmen heed these admonitions or not, the one evident fact is, that they will never atone for the past or bring light to the future until they cut off all ignoble ties and flee from all mendacious shams, and by a steadfast worship of truth and righteousness, trample

under foot every racial delusion that blocks the way to their social and spiritual elevation.

The ability to conform to the requirements of enveloping conditions is the highest test of evolution for individuals or races. It is therefore evident that the first duty of the negro is to see with unequivocal rightmindedness his place and his relation and obligations to society and himself. The second, to discern with unerring instinct true men and women and true things. The third, to eschew, without evasion or subterfuge, vicious race besetments, and instead thereof plant within himself such impulses for right-doing as shall weave desire into principle, and knowledge into action. That the negro is not irrevocably bound by hereditary forms of thought and action is attested by substantial proofs within the race of personal culture and regenerative growth. So convincing is the evidence which these examples furnish, that there need be no longer any question as to the ability of the freedman to change his attitude in any respect that he wills.

It is to this end that we shall again and again, throughout this discussion, insist that man may will himself into any regenerative attitude that he pleases. What we mean by willing is identifying one's self with an object to the extent that one assimilates one's self with it. Of course we are conscious that before the negro can acquire any adequate comprehension of the essential qualities of character a complete transformation of his mental capacity, ethical

ideas, social relations, and civic notions must first take place. He himself must sow the seeds of self-regeneration. But assuming a desire for regeneration, the first duty of the negro is to know himself—that is, to comprehend in an elementary sense all essential weaknesses of his nature. As it is, he is mentally dense and sensually enthralled; he has in him no indwelling spirit of self-dependence, self-help, and self-government, and he stands greatly in need of simplicity of manners as well as severity of morals. The awakened negro, who would be free from inherited degradation, needs to realize the loathsomeness of his nature. He must acquire a wholesome aversion for physical weaknesses, a deep abhorrence of hypocrisies, and a sense of the mockery of a religion that enslaves the body and corrupts the highest instincts of his soul. When he realizes such virtues of action he will emerge out of racial sloth and ignorance into character and purity, as easily as the lotus plant rises out of the Nile mud into fragrance and beauty.

The doctrine is current that human improvement is of necessity a slow process; such is, however, a pernicious fallacy. Human progress, social or material, may be set in motion instantaneously and continued indefinitely, so long as the laws of justice, of intelligence, and of equal opportunity are allowed full play, and man wills to grow. Man is the arbiter of his own destiny, with infinite possibilities of development, and as a self-determining being dwells of



choice in sunshine or shadow, light or darkness. Speaking now in a fundamental sense, men are in that state in which they prefer to exist; they may, to be sure, have impulsive longings for other conditions of living, but so long as these are not concreted into facts, the presumption must be that they are content where they are. What is more obvious than that regeneration is an awakening to needs of which there was no previous sense of want, together with ability to supply the remedy. The groundwork of human growth is a recognized want, a concentration of desire, a formulation of conviction, an organized purpose, an energized action. Upon these characteristics rest the distinctions which separate men into doers and non-doers. Where inefficiency exists among individuals of a superior people, the fact that such persons belong to a race of energy and capacity for achievement gives them a tremendous advantage over members of races who, even though their equals in other respects, have no background of honorable achievement to incite them to action.

These conditions have been fully realized in the case of the negro, whose mental and manual inefficiency has been such as to excite the contempt of superiors in letters and arouse the hostility of labor in every skilled industry. The lesson taught him is, that while inequalities occur in every variety of life, like and unlike seek affinitive groups; that nature remorselessly assort and classifies mankind into

capables and incapables, and that by such inexorable and infallible methods are individual worth and racial worth attested. Racial sentiment may extenuate the fact that so far the freedman has shown no serious purpose either for social or industrial betterment. But let us have done with the folly of saying that the negro has had but three decades of opportunity for self-culture, when, as a matter of fact, he has had an equal chance with the rest of mankind from the dawn of creation. In truth, he has enjoyed superior advantages, because, had he possessed superior endowment to start with, his unimpaired identity throughout the changing cycles of time placed him in a position to hold firmly to ancestral traditions, and profit by the accumulated experience of millenniums.

The first step in social evolution is obedience to law; for even with many disadvantages on his side, a law-abiding man is always stronger than a lawless one. Coherent and capable action is unattainable without discipline; success is impossible for any people who revolt at systematic training. The second step is to discover the full measure of individual endowment, and to limit activities to such lines of endeavor as personal fitness justifies; otherwise the intensest effort becomes merely a waste of energy — a fruitless folly. Conscious endowment is the prelude to capable achievement, though there may be in races or individuals a wealth of strong qualities of which they have but dim notions, and which are only brought to light in actual

endeavor. Such cases however, are rare; and where they exist, efficiency is crippled for want of previous knowledge of the essential things which make for recognition and proficiency in the industrial world. The sole discernible difference between men is their capacity for capable doing, and on that foundation the whole superstructure of individual and racial differentiation rests. The whole of humanity, therefore, regardless of color or race, may be divided into efficient and non-efficient groups.

The successful race represents the most energetic people, and racial efficiency exhibits its highest development in that class who have acquired the greatest command over themselves and the most intelligent control over the forces of nature. The latter achievement, by the way, gives to any race an immeasurable superiority over inferior types. Strong convictions make strong men, and develop strong characters. The strongest individuals within a race are those who give character to its endeavor, so in a larger sense the strong races are the triumphant nations of the world. In the highest civilization two motives lead mankind to the conflict of life: the struggle to live; the struggle to enjoy. Inferior peoples, however, whether aggregated by tribal barbarism or submerged by modern civilization, merely exist; and existence is not living. The negro has not reached the stage of prudent living nor rational enjoyment. This simple statement shows opportunities for some wisely directed activities in his behalf.



There is a recognized vital difference in men ; but while there are degrees of difference in inherent aptitudes, it is evident that no man lives up to the full measure of his actual ability. In the main, self-content is the chief characteristic of all submerged classes. We find this conclusion confirmed by that interminable sameness which obtains in savage life ; for savagery, disdaining everything but its own ideals, and intolerant of any deviation therefrom, spurns every innovation that embodies typical changes. Obviously, then, where a condition of low social development obtains, rigid adherence to ancestral customs and aversion to change will perpetuate them. Where there is no discernible progress, there is instead retrogression. Such are the actual disclosures of negro life ; for while he is a creature of unspeakable pretensions within his own segregated enclosure, yet when brought into contact with a superior civilization, and compelled to abide by its mandates, he shrinks into insignificance as his racial inferiority and unfitness to find the place and discharge the functions of a responsible factor in the social organism are made manifest. The negro is the waste product of American civilization, but as a ward of humanity he ought to be utilized and made a valuable member of society. A duty so obvious should not be evaded.

The freedman is essentially a helpless being, with an inbred disposition to lean on somebody or something. He has always waited for others to right his wrongs,

redress his injuries, open his understanding, outline his faith, point out his duty, direct his labors, provide for his support, and bear the brunt of all that concerns his welfare. He has never evinced a self-kindled creative aptitude ; he has neither trained faculties of understanding nor an awakened mind, and possesses neither the energy nor ability to tread voluntarily the avenues of human knowledge, under the processes that require exact and steady application for his development. Every semblance of that power of endurance inherent in the Saxon race is conspicuously wanting in the freed people. So lacking have they seemed in every element of serious, self-compelling determination that they have yet to evince capacity for undergoing the stress and strain of intelligent strife under the institutions of our country.

That the negro never fairly comprehends the ends of life is fully substantiated by the evidence that when called upon to deal with vital questions he is superficial and chimerical. He lays stress on showy pretensions and parades his childish inexactness in doing as example of capable endeavor, regardless of the fact that eagerness to be rid of manly duties does not evidence fitness for them. That physical, moral, and mental degradation obtains where such conditions exist is evident. The negro people, however, are in a transition state, wherein they have suffered much from the intoxication of irresponsible freedom and undiscerned duty. Steadfast, sober living is not their heritage, and possibly may never be acquired to

the extent of thoroughly assimilating them with our civilization. Nevertheless, for all negroes who sincerely desire to exchange their evil besetments for character, sobriety, and intelligence, the way is open to them to acquire and apply sound and practical common-sense methods to every act of life.

The recalcitrant attitude of the negro is open to well-deserved criticism. It is obvious that he is wanting in that conscious ardor of integrity, that cool valor of truth, that undismayed courage, so characteristic of the best expressions of American manhood. And besides needing wholesome instruction concerning the duties of citizenship, his obligations to society, and relations to his fellow-men, there is a pressing need of the negro's revolt against inherent barbarous impulses and superstitious follies, and against mental apathy and spiritual levity. There is unquestioned need, as we have said, of the race acquiring that divine function, common sense, as well as healthy convictions of truth and righteousness. But true development of the freedman is impossible without the utter extermination, root and branch, of all negroid beliefs and practices. They must be replaced with the best expressions of Christian thought, — truth, courage, honesty, self-respect, reverence, and aspiration for what is noble and good. Each of these virtues is pregnant with divine vitality, and represents a substantial element in human character. No character is complete which does not embrace these qualities, and in so far as negroes are lacking



in them they are less than men and women. On the other hand, in so far as these virtues are in the ascendant, they are growing in true strength.

The worth and utility of a race depend on its aptitude for intelligent civilization, — that is, for scientific as well as ethical evolution. Now, while we do not doubt the capacity of the freedmen for acquiring a higher standard of living, evidence shows that they fail to comprehend the true motive for racial regeneration. There is no hard and fast rule governing social elevation. Nevertheless, the primary requisite in the case of the freedman is to raise the average racial aptitude for intelligent development. This cannot be done other than through self-knowledge, derived by accurate and painstaking analysis and observation. The negro needs, with a full and adequate endowment of practical moral and spiritual qualities, a wholesome and larger vision of life and its realities; in short, such an outlook as will sweep away from before his mental gaze inbred delusions and shams, and lead him to comprehend and realize in the completest sense the need and worth of truth.

From the trend of current events we are led to believe that the American people have fully decided that the negro is not to be further propped or prompted for the performance of duties, though the disposition is growing in every section to accord him full and fair play in a common struggle for existence. As we see it, friend and foe are alike determined that hereafter capacity shall fix and maintain his place in

the ranks of civilization and industry, — an attitude furnishing no just cause of complaint to the conscious capables of the race, to whom opportunity and achievement are thereby decreed. To be sure, the incapables are bound to be thrust aside in competitive strife, but the law of life is that every man shall bear his own burden and work out his own salvation. It is evidently the duty of the negro to recognize fully that social inequalities exist, and to understand thoroughly that all he can reasonably ask is that the door be left open, so that, filled by aspirations and achievement, he may pass from inferior to superior grades of living.

One unfortunate feature confronting us is that the negro isolates and segregates himself in racial organizations, not for self-help, but to escape from an environment to whose exactions his feeble abilities cannot respond. The oppressions of slavery established a sort of federation among the enthralled which freedom instantly dissolved. There are now no sound reasons why negroes should band together except to develop themselves, — a thing they do not do in their associations. So long as the freedmen continue to be a willingly submerged class, they will remain incapable of self-direction and self-government, that is, incapable of self-regeneration. We suspect that negro passion for revelling in words and rioting in emotions has as much to do with his studied avoidance of contact with the white race as any innate sense of actual inferiority. Personal vanity is a potent factor in self-exclusion.

For the negro as for other phases of ill-conditioned humanity all sorts of fads have been exploited. The college settlement scheme has been one of them, but each and all ignore the basis on which all wholesome and permanent human development is erected, — that is, by first making adequate provision for the physical wants of man. Ethical teachings have no show in the presence of cold and hunger. Notwithstanding this we persist in undertaking the impossible. A far different result would be achieved were it realized that sense and sympathy are potent factors in successful reformatory work. The one fatal defect in all undertakings whose aim is to uplift the submerged is the assumption, on the part of those set to lead, of their personal superiority and all-knowingness; or else that which is equally offensive, — a sentimental tolerance of evil conditions. In either case, a latent hostility is encountered at the outset, for many an unlearned person is not only keen-witted, but a shrewd reader of human nature; and down deep in the hearts of such people is recorded a subtle analysis of motives and character that would not discredit the profoundest scholarship. What the intelligent poor and needy want, therefore, is sympathy, understanding, fellowship, and kinship in human suffering. He or she, who, while representing the highest and best of everything above them, is one with them in sympathetic helpfulness, will always succeed as a teacher, and none other need attempt it with any hope of success.



The primary and fundamental mistake made by American educators is the assumption that all negroes are capable of moral development by mental culture. Culture gives to the mind dexterity and efficiency, but never forceful strength; that is an inheritance, and intellectual hardihood is an endowment that cannot be hid. The negro mind, however, is wanting in strength; it is weak and foolish, and instigated to action by whatever caprice or credulity may inspire. We unreservedly assert that there is no value to the freedman in mere intellectual development. Mental training without sound moral character will not make a great man or good woman; nor will individual mental training and manual training combined regenerate the negro people. The whole scheme of their training, in our conception, is self-support in the highest sense; that is, the acquirement of character, capacity, in other words, the ability to do honest, capable work for God and humanity. These conclusions can not be dismissed as vagaries. So eminent an authority as the late Doctor Arnold of Rugby has said that, from his experience in school and teaching he had come to believe that the difference between one man and another was not so much mere intellectual ability, as moral energy. To the omission to note that fact, is due much of the failure which has attended attempts at negro regeneration.

In justification of negro illiteracy it has been urged that it is only the few among all races who think, and are moved to action by the grandeur of

thought and inspiration of lofty ideals. That may be true in the highest sense. However, all of mankind think to some extent, and we have the highest authority for the statement, that "as a man thinks in his heart, so he is," — that is, as material causes create and perpetuate physical characteristics, so, to a greater degree, ideas and thoughts mould and fashion the mental and spiritual nature of men.

Aryan thought is mercilessly encompassing the negro, and driving him to the alternative of annihilation or regeneration. He has reached a stage in his career where he should choose between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, growth and decay, life and death. Nor do we doubt that under wise guidance the freedmen may come to realize that to know the truth, and to be true, is the greatest of human achievement. Truth alone has the genius of universal emancipation, the power to create vital and responsive transformation in the human heart, to sink humanity in self-forgetful service to God and man.

There is among negroes themselves no agreement as to what constitutes racial disabilities, no uniform recognition of their grievances, and no agreement as to their needs. The reason for such an anomalous state of affairs lies in the fact that negro society is rent asunder and torn into innumerable factions by its senseless jealousies and petty strivings. It follows that not only is it impossible to institute coherent methods of race policy, but that no negro can speak

with the authority that comes from universally recognized leadership. There are those who assume to represent the freed people, but when their pretensions are examined it will be found that they have no tangible following. Those who pose as race leaders are intolerant of all criticism or suggestion within their own ranks, and are implacably arrayed against all innovations that make for public good. In their efforts to maintain a precarious supremacy over deluded subjects they have grown as brutal in official bearing as were the negro drivers during the days of African chattelism. They are constantly striving to shut out from the freed people all genuine light and knowledge, though at the same time fostering every despoiling scheme that adds to their private gain.

With its accredited leaders sitting in darkness and revelling in abasement, with each conception, impulse, and aspiration centred in dreams of sensuous indulgence, is it any wonder that the race refuses to awaken and will not be aroused? The negro pulpit is dumb on all vital issues, even though all of its best discourses are purloined from white preachers. The negro press is equally impotent in helpful suggestion, though not wanting in obsequious flattery and ill-advised contentions. The truth is that no American negro has ever planned or instituted a broadly beneficent movement in morals, letters, or material affairs for racial welfare. The freedman, we grant, has set up some crude



imitations of worthy agencies on poverty-stricken foundations, and essayed to evolve self-sustaining institutions from illiterate mendicancy, but no one will be foolish enough to say that he has either evinced wisdom or shown success in what he has attempted.

Aside from its self-promoting schemes, negro leadership has apparently neither motive nor object in view, and, so far as we can observe, is blind to the significance of every passing event. For proof we need only call attention to the case of the rural freedman, whose condition, no one denies, is an appalling example of hopeless subjection to industrial bondage. This patient, simple-hearted, muscular animal, whose crude industries create Southern affluence, inhabits a one-roomed log cabin. His wife, children, and himself are perennially clad in tatters and beclouded with ignorance. On the one hand, he is hopelessly chained to poverty, and on the other, perpetually overshadowed by mountains of mental darkness. As he has no foresight in management and lives from hand to mouth, he is systematically despoiled by white and black knavery.

Notwithstanding that the physical poverty and helpless servitude of the rural freedman constitute one of the problems of our age, and in spite of the boasted scholarship of the American negroes, there is not to be found a single member of the more fortunate class who has suggested, devised, or set in motion any feasible and helpful movement in behalf of the plantation negro. On the contrary, the educated

negro, so far, has not only evinced no capacity for wise methods affecting the redemption of the freedmen, but apart from his craven submission and fault-finders, he is wholly at sea on all of the fundamental issues of racial sociology. His fiery denunciations of social ostracisms are marvels of rhetorical rhapsody, and his fervid prophecies of the achievements of his people a hundred years hence reach the topmost wave of hysterical ecstasy; but as to how the race, with its millenniums of sensuous burdens, can attain the one or eliminate the other he is portentously silent, because he obviously has no suggestion to make.

It may be said that negro ecclesiastical organizations have been potent factors in furthering the regeneration of the freedman. In what respect? Our convictions are that negro churches, as now directed, are not of the slightest value in race redemption. While they might be helpful and efficient in many ways, they are steadily withdrawing from contact with white associations, thus leaving behind them their only incentive to awakening. Furthermore, notwithstanding the multiplication of such churches, the morality of the freedman continues to be scarified with carnal indulgences, and both his pulpit and pew overshadowed by sensual depravity. Nor can we shut our eyes to the fact that negro religion, as a factor in racial regeneration, has lost its grip on the masses of the freed people, who have been largely driven by its shameful weaknesses and pretentious arrogance to break away from all ethical restraints.

In consequence, negro churches have become merely social rendezvous for the young and places of fetich worship for the old. To be sure, the freedman, no matter what his degree of turpitude, is a religious enthusiast: nevertheless, his religion is not founded on approved ethical principles, nor does it possess such features as commend themselves to the sober judgment of mankind.

It is vain to ask the negro what is his practical belief regarding himself, his relations to society, his duties to God and man, and what his sincerity of purpose. He never questions himself as to what he is, what he believes, or what he ought to do; and should he, in his faint-hearted way, hesitantly ponder on the great issues of life and death, he never goes to the primal source of all knowledge, the God-inspired light within his own soul. The freedman neither has relish nor zest for realities, and confines his notion of religion wholly to physical emotions. We are justified in saying, then, that so long as the negro priesthood is neither actuated by righteous earnestness for race redemption nor animated by a sense of disinterested service to mankind, but chiefly concerned about idle support, ostentatious personal display, and revelry in that prolific field of turbid licentiousness which the pastoral care of such people affords, there will be but slight help rendered from that body.

Existing conditions are all the more regrettable since the opportunities of the past in every department of industrial activity were golden, and have



gone beyond recall. There awaits the negro of to-day and the future only the hard conditions that accompany fierce competitive strife. It is true that the negro social organizations, as represented by their churches and fraternal societies, have in them germs of coöperation, which, if properly developed, might effect the unification of the race and its material and intellectual growth. But since they show no progress, there is ground for believing that the negro has no disposition to help himself. Besides, any inbred desire for self-help is out of the question so long as he is the recipient of indiscriminate aid. Such has been his absolute dependence on others that we seriously doubt his capacity for realizing the need of self-help, or the necessity of wisely devised energetic action in his own behalf. Were he once awakened to reasonable diligence and endowed with practical sagacity, he could do much to help himself. Nothing, however, is more obvious than that so long as the illiterate freedman is without rational guidance, he will be hopelessly enslaved by every sensuous folly.

A discreet and worthy race leadership could be built up and feasible results achieved, were the good and true of the race to band together and work in unison for the eradication of negro weaknesses. In no more effectual way could this be begun than for the preachers and laymen of the freedman's fraternal societies and churches to secure for guidance and instruction for each county in the South a fearless,

God-ordained minister, doctor, and lawyer, and give to them, when found, a loyal and wholehearted support along every line that makes for truth and righteous action. A mighty transformation might be wrought in the freed people if the professionally trained but poverty-stricken negroes struggling in Northern cities, endowed with courage and desire for serving their race, were to go South in such an undertaking. We believe that the most rational and effective progress will be made in racial regeneration only when the negro takes the lead in his redemption, not in isolation, but in cordial coöperation with every feasible agency. We may, moreover, express the hope that the impulsive and sorely tossed freedman may not only realize the actual obstacles which impede his advancement, but also the need of beginning anew the process of self-regeneration.

We have constantly emphasized the need of the regeneration of the negro; some may therefore ask, What are his chief besetments? A frank answer shows him to be immersed in poverty, steeped in ignorance, stifled with immorality, inherently lazy, and a born pilferer. These are undoubtedly his chief defects. To shed a sidelight on some other pronounced phases of racial character we shall further ask, Are not many of the injuries which he suffers in the way of assault and repression due to his crafty pretensions and offensive interference in affairs of which he has no knowledge, and which are none of his business? We have said that the first and

essential thing for the negro to do is to realize fully what he is. Until that is brought about it is sheer nonsense to talk about racial regeneration. But when once he is made to understand the poverty of his endowments, the absurdity of his pretensions, the folly of his credulity, the futility of his attitude, it will then be possible for him to cease lying, stealing, loitering, and with these things abandoned for good, he may become diligent and trustworthy in speech and action. There is evidence that racial discontent is in the air; and with revolt struggling to its feet to express in coherent speech a renunciation of the shams, delusions, and falsehoods of priestly and scholastic trumperies, a conflict is inevitable. In fact, a single true bugle blast would precipitate immediate action. And what more righteous strife has ever been waged than that would be against the criminal ignorance and social depravity of the freedman? Inasmuch, then, as relentless contest for social betterment will come, it behooves negro manhood and womanhood at once to bestir itself in preparation for the impending change.

The inference that the negro people are not wholly bad is evidenced by a certain affectionate demeanor observable in their young children, and which is wholly unlike the masterful, self-conscious attitude of white children of the same age. In fact, such children, when apart from vicious companionship, are attractive, and evince such a wealth of tenderness in feeling and sweetness of disposition that no



one who gazes into their liquid eyes and notes their eager, wistful glances of desire for approbation, or their shy humility when reproved, would ever dream of linking them with the repulsive examples of negro adult viciousness. Whatever possibilities there may be in negro awakening, it is the child that to-day represents the "promise and potency" of racial achievement — the may or may not be of actual regeneration, the trend and the status of the future man or woman. All rational faith, then, working toward the awakening and uplifting of the freed people, should centre in child culture. Of course, the ideal process for negro regeneration would be to take its boys and girls under five years of age and train them to maturity in complete severance from all racial contact. As matters now stand, this would be largely impracticable. It could be done, however, in a partial way, by the establishment of orphanages, and immeasurable gain would come to the future representatives of the race, were the multitude of orphan children so taken in hand and trained apart from all connection with the negro people. We could develop in that way a very superior type of negro citizens. Meanwhile, in order to deal wisely with the great body of the freedmen, the only feasible way is to train the children in conjunction with their parents, in the manner we have fully indicated elsewhere.

No sober-minded person will dissent from the proposition that the value of family life is social

efficiency; that is, the ability to convert each of its members into a capable, efficient, and respectable member of the community. It may well be said, that where sound and wholesome family training ceases, downward tendencies predominate in individual lives, and social degeneracy begins. Moral qualities are the foundation of social efficiency, which is but another name for fraternal service; but moral qualities need to be inculcated with discriminate care. The duties of motherhood, needless to say, require an eminent degree of fitness and adaptability for discharging obligations that cannot be turned aside. Motherhood, we insist, is the responsible teacher and custodian of the manners, character, and morals of the home, and such responsibility cannot be evaded or shirked; and the mother who does not inculcate the essential elements of manhood and womanhood in child life and living is an absolute failure. Moreover, less social degeneracy would exist were mothers to inculcate early in their children, and plant in every fibre of their beings, the great primary truth that sex neither exempts from nor increases moral responsibility; that what is wrong for a girl is wrong for a boy; that what is infamous for one is infamous for the other.

Speaking now in a fundamental sense, what the men and women of the race, as well as all others of our submerged classes, need to realize, is that home living is the God-ordained school for human propagation, growth, and discipline in ethical and in-

dustrial virtues. No one, therefore, has a right to become a husband and father or a wife and mother who lacks the essential knowledge of home-making, or is wanting in ability or disposition to keep a home; and we regard it as the culmination of social immorality for any couple to bring a child into being in an environment divested of every element requisite for its sound development. It matters not what may be their inherent qualities, there will be no wholesome development of the young until we have regenerated fathers and mothers to nurture and guide them into paths of right living. We make no mistake here in saying that negro family life is the rock-bed of truth, virtue, and righteousness, or the breeding spot of falsehood, iniquity, and crime. Obviously, then, what negro men and women need to acquire more than anything else is the knowledge of what constitutes a home and the capacity to make one, and, when made, to keep it in cleanliness, sobriety, and privacy. No greater social virtue can be acquired by the American freedwoman than the ability to do the things accounted drudgery in domestic life without discontent with herself or complaint to others, and, in so doing, manage her affairs with discretion and order, and rear her children in a healthy and wholesome fashion.

All who are interested in the freedman need to realize that ancestral habits and the daily speech, manners, and acts of parents exert a far greater influence on the lives of their children, and outweigh



all the superimposed instruction of schoolroom precept and example. Educated ability, as we know, is the result of impressions received, mastered, and assimilated in the brain, and carried out in action. This, unfortunately, is not at present the result of negro mental training, and it never will be, so long as the home-life of the freedman is the antipode of the schoolroom. He will not give up cherished habits and inbred follies, unless that which is tangibly better is substituted in their stead. Nevertheless, while negroes are largely culpable for their social degradation, the most slovenly woman in dense negro settlements will develop into an industrious and orderly housekeeper when isolated from her class and surrounded by thrifty associates. Many a solitary negro family in our Northern communities may be cited, whose industrial regeneration was achieved under social pressure. It will be seen, therefore, that we have substantial ground for the belief that, were negroes persistently drilled for a reasonable time in habits of thoughtfulness, rectitude, and veracity, they would in due course, from sheer force of acquired character, instinctively prefer the saner side of human attitude.

Our duty here is to state facts concerning a very unique type of humanity, in whom millenniums of ancestral physical and psychical traits have been interminably transmitted and unchangingly reproduced, but many of which were held in repressive abeyance by the rigorous supervision exercised by slavery.

While we have persistently pointed out causes of racial degradation, we have been equally insistent that the one fundamental remedy is the eradication, root and branch, of negro ideals, characteristics, and other inherited idiosyncrasies. This cannot be accomplished by merely imposing a veneer of American civilization. It can only be brought about by such transforming methods as will make him a new creature in thought, speech, habit, and character. But at this time the negro has neither the intellect nor will to institute self-redemptive measures, and obviously where there is no such desire there will be no regeneration. In such cases, talk does no good; advice is wasted, rebuke hardens, and pleading from a superior is accepted as a sign of weakness. Under such conditions, then, the only effective and efficient agencies are the shalls and shall-nots of command, backed up by imperative force. There will never come such a thing as racial awakening to a higher life and living unless there shall be instituted by the superior environment, a standard that permits neither excuse nor relaxation in demands of capable negro performance, and this must be supplemented on the part of the negro himself by a determination to part company with every phase of racial degradation. The one inexorable fact that the freedman ought to know is, that he cannot and will not succeed in any line until he shall stand erect, braced and poised for heroic endeavor.

As to what shall be the particular nature and character of the force employed to uproot the negro's

contempt for decency and order, we do not stipulate, other than that it shall fitly apply to those whom it undertakes to coerce, and be of such inexorable and all-pervading efficiency as to implant in them ethical and mental vigor. We speak advisedly when we suggest the employment of restraining and compelling force, and in the full knowledge that the unresponsive negro will not be regenerated by persuasion. There may be those who will object to the use of force in dealing with those who have no faith in our ideals. But may we not ask, What feasible and effective substitute would they propose in its stead? Assuredly tentative experiments of sentiment are not to be seriously considered, and certainly not to the extent of displacing tested practical measures. Therefore, until some effective self-governing scheme is devised, which shall animate our submerged and subject classes with desire for higher living, the exponents and custodians of our civilization have a right to say to them: "You evince neither capacity for rational self-government nor intelligent conformity to our standards of civic social polity. Hence, while we have no right to force our methods of life on people beyond the bounds of our own domain, we have a God-ordained right to insist that all who are within the limits of our custody shall accept and conform to the standards which we have set up, and if they fail therein, we will exercise the right to force them into submission or extermination."

What is more obvious than that the primary and



controlling factors in human government are faith and force? A prerequisite of faith is reason, the capable exercise of which implies a degree of intelligent development. On the other hand, force is the chosen instrument of awakened faith to carry into effect its purposes, especially in so far as these relate to its subjects. In a larger sense, force is the universal agent relied upon to correct refractoriness. So long, then, as coercive discipline is required, there should never be any relaxation of wisely exercised force in dealing with predisposing types of turpitude in the management of the family and civic society. When individuals or races are amenable solely to sensuous impulses, admonitions are vain and reproof futile. Especially are we convinced that negro nature requires the employment of compulsory force to induce its conformity to our standards of living.

Sentiment aside, what are the recurring facts relating to the social development of submerged classes intermingled with or apart from a higher civilization? We note first, that no inferior people evince an aptitude for rational self-guidance ; and second, that they always mistake conciliation for weakness, and magnanimity for cowardice. Since the negro is at best nothing more than a domesticated savage, the plain duty of those in authority is to treat him under all circumstances with fairness and justice, but without entering into any parley, concession, or compromise, because nothing less than a fearless and steadfast determination to enforce lawful respect and obedience will bring

him to a proper understanding of place and duty. He should be controlled in a spirit of benefaction as well as of protection, and in this respect we can profitably take a leaf out of the experience of the English-speaking people who are the leaders of the world in colonization, commerce, civilization, and Christianity.

We have candidly undertaken to ascertain facts and suggest remedies, in what has preceded ; but above all, our aim has been to construct a simple and feasible way out of the quagmire of race degradation, and present it in such a manner as would appeal to every best instinct in the negro's breast. This, we believe has been done, yet we are met with such whimpering queries as, "What can we do?" or such despicable fatuity as asserts that a century hence the negro will surpass the white man in wealth and intelligence. Confronted by such imbecile vacuity, what hope is there that a vain, pompous, self-seeking racial leadership will ever see the facts which make for negro regeneration or adequately realize that it is not necessary to manhood or womanhood that the freedman should first acquire wealth, or revel in material luxuries, or even be enfranchised with the liberty to sell his vote, or hold an office he cannot fill. But not content with antagonizing every sane movement for racial awakening, a spirit of aimless unrest has been insidiously sown among the freedmen through the hortatory quackeries of race demagogues and to such a degree that many yearn for a change in vocation

and locality under the absurd impression that their mere transference to a new settlement would give them opportunity and standing which they do not now enjoy. Yet even were the physical and social impediments in the negro's pathway set aside, he must have a conscious realization of the why and wherefore of the essentials of life before any radical change can be wrought in his nature. Another thing to be heeded by the freedman is that though opportunity may assist it never creates integrity — a quality of character of which the negro has yet to give demonstrable proof of possessing. Environment only aids in developing that which already exists.

The chief question which confronts the freedman, and the one on whose answer the most vital consequences to himself and others depend, is, Shall he resolutely face his duty to stay and work out his redemption in the land of his birth, or shall he, by evasion, subterfuge, and flight, cravenly surrender every present and future possibility of racial regeneration? Our convictions are and have been that nowhere else is it possible for negro manhood and womanhood to be achieved, or racial degeneracy demonstrated, other than in his own Southland of cradled hopes and buried despair. Besides, where else has he so secure a footing, and in what other spot can he find greater opportunity or inspiration for deed and daring than in that soil watered by the sweat and enriched by the blood of ancestral servile toil? Where in all the earth could nobler victories



for human regeneration be won than in that region of balmy verdure and delicious languor, within whose subtropical Eden the freedman has an arena for mental awakening, moral evolution, and material opportunity whose possibilities are unsurpassed?

There is among the freedmen a widespread feeling that somehow they have gone wrong, or perhaps have never been right, and a harsh experience has at least taught them that illiterate poverty is no match for intelligent affluence. Hedged in by dense ignorance and hopeless indigence, and held in subjection to an imperious control, how can the negro's escape from such conditions be effected? There is but one possible avenue open to the race, and that is to establish rural schools, and put land and education within the reach of the indigent, illiterate freedman. Negro opportunity and welfare lie in clinging to the country and in adhering to those industries of which they have some knowledge. By becoming producers for others they best provide for their own sustenance,—a thing that they might not always attain in the vicissitudes of herded competition. Nor is this all, for well-wrought agricultural achievement will implant in foresighted industry conscious self-respect, and earn for the race the honest appreciation of fellow-men. It would also conduce in the highest degree to their social advancement, were there an inexorable expulsion and exclusion of the freedmen from our cities, for the reason that only in rural living can they secure for themselves and their children

health, strength, morality, intelligence, and physical comfort. The goal of common sense, and duty for every negro, is a cottage home, and sufficient land to provide reasonable subsistence for a legitimate family, in order that each and every member of the household may lead a wholesome life and build up an exemplary character.

And what are the bounds of negro station and duty? Inasmuch as there is to every man a place wherein success is ordained, and out of which failure is decreed, the obvious place of the negro is that which his measure of intelligence and capacity best fit him to fill. Such is his ordained sphere of action, and such are the terms upon which in the long run the station of all mankind is determined. Therefore, with this single standard set before him, the negro should promptly fall into line, and speedily find his rightful place in human activity. When he, awakened, has found his sphere, he should stay content until he has demonstratively outgrown its requirements. Meanwhile, he should sedulously cultivate the faculty of common sense, and seek to acquire character. To that end, he should emulate wholesome examples, and make his own life an inspiration to the rest of mankind.

## CHAPTER XIV

### NATIONAL ASSIMILATION

A NATION is an organized community under the jurisdiction of an established sovereignty; that is, every nation is composed of two elements, viz. government and subjects. Social organisms are created by a body of individuals having definite aims, and united for a common purpose, it may be for war, or peace, wealth and grandeur, or truth and righteousness. Whatever the controlling motive of the social compact, the organic trend of life and activity is determined by the maximum of individual preference. The justification for government is the security and happiness of the governed, whose conformity to its principles is the test of loyal citizenship. Where the social organism is based on autonomous principles, every constituent member is charged with the conservation of national aims and interests, and in proportion and to such degree as each constituent unit contributes to the general advancement of national aims and ideals, so strong in purpose and great in achievement the organism becomes. A nation at war with itself invites destruction. In government, then, whatever makes for the common good is to be fos-



tered; whatever militates against it should be suppressed. The right of preservation, as well as common sense, decrees that all warring elements within the body politic shall be assimilated or extirpated.

Social antagonisms of more or less acuteness always arise between people within the same nation, who are in antithetical stages of development. Moreover, it is impossible for people of dissimilar experience to come into perfect accord and sympathy with each other, except on the common ground of reciprocal human service. This implies a willingness on the part of inferior endeavors to conform to the standards of superior achievements. Negro and Saxon development are in opposition; in this lies the sum and substance of their disagreement. When we speak of Anglo-Saxon civilization, however, we do not mean a particular race development, but a type of growth characteristic of a certain people. In a narrower sense it may partake more or less of pronounced racial habits. It constitutes the chief feature of American and English civilization, and it is a mode of development open to all people, for adoption and supersession of their own habits of living. Of course, such an exchange involves the giving up of many idiosyncrasies, but such surrender is in keeping with the law of progressive development for races or individuals. It may be well to add that we are not to be understood as saying that Anglo-Saxon people have developed a civilization of ethical and social complete-

ness. Such a statement would be at variance with facts. What we do say, and what all authentic evidence substantiates, is that, so far as they have gone, their comprehension of what life and living ought to be is altogether in advance of contemporaries, and beyond anything that has hitherto evolved from the human mind.

In America we have set for our standard certain well-defined ideals toward whose consummation our best energies are directed. What may be rightly insisted upon is that all inferior types of development within our borders shall join us in seeking a realization of national aims and purposes. These are noble and lofty demands, and as they are obviously divorced from every shred of individual selfishness, they appeal only to the highest instincts of the human heart, and they must be heeded by our submerged classes if they would enjoy the blessings which flow from the development of American liberty. What we aim to make clear is the conclusion that every member of a social compact, whether of alien or native birth, is bound to acquire a comprehensive knowledge of national ideals, and to make it his primary duty to conform to them.

Homogeneous nation-making is a complex process, and especially so in a country like this, where numerous race varieties, gathered from every quarter of the globe, easily drift into factional groups, which, in ignorance of the highest functions of the government, undertake at the behest of partisan dictation to dis-

charge the duties of American citizenship. But the United States, in a thoroughly altruistic spirit, has set for itself the task of homogeneously developing, in patriotism, education, and civilization, the people of all tongues and classes who dwell within its borders. Therefore, in pursuance of that purpose, the fusion of antagonistic races is constantly taking place. The immigrant German, Irish, French, and other nationalities, through intercourse with their native born members and other American people, are actually being incorporated and assimilated in our civilization to such a degree that original race characteristics are completely obliterated in their immediate descendants. The principles of our autonomy are free men, free speech, free opportunity, in a government of the people, by the people, for the people. All of the component parts of the nation are compelled to subscribe to these principles, or else be excluded from active participation in government affairs.

It is evident that we are at present scarcely more than an organized community of composite people, with widely varying relations, among which, though not the least in number, is a negro population that is not only set apart from the main body of the American people by physical marks, but by mental and social traits as well. It is a population in a confessedly low state of racial development, whose instincts are incompatible with, and whose acts are opposed to, American-Anglo-Saxon civilization; a people who, though set in the midst of ceaseless



transformations, do not seem to realize that they have both place and functions in the ultimate composition of American life. We have already observed that republican institutions rest upon compacts entered into by a free people for their mutual welfare and protection. The Constitution of the United States confers equal rights and imposes equal obligations on all who conform to its requirements, in order to assimilate ultimately, both in conviction and endeavor, every dissentient element within the body politic.

But whatever may be our notion of federal and social assimilation, it is well to understand that mere external contact will not unite mankind; for, while some men will imitate within well-defined limits what is set before them, they will not emulate the higher characteristics of a contiguous superior type. That is, when a low and high degree of civilization are in juxtaposition, the lower will not always of its own volition assimilate with, or model itself after, the manners and language of the higher. It is possible for two races of different degrees of development to live side by side, and participate in daily superficial intercourse, using the same language and employing like symbols of expression, and yet be, as a matter of fact, separated by a spanless chasm. The strong and capable consort with the strong and capable, and unite in pushing aside the weak and incapable. Nor is it strange that inferior types should be objected to by progressive and superior

racess of mankind, for in any given organism no harmonious social adjustment is possible where discordant elements have unchecked sway. However much individual men may suffer as to means and methods in government, the organized social compact is in duty bound to insist upon and compel agreement with, and conformity to, the aims and purposes for which such government was instituted.

The negroes are an alien and diverse race, and differ from the main body of our people. They neither exhibit positive creative qualities, nor represent a brave, strong, self-reliant type of humanity; and they persist in clinging to race ideals and in pursuing paths diametrically opposed to those of the whites. Life, we are told, is a ceaseless struggle for existence, and survival of species is proof of adaption to environment. We take it, therefore, that when race aversion is derived from antagonistic acts of a race or type incorporated in the body politic, it is well founded, and becomes the legitimate expression of a superior people toward an inferior race. It will exist toward any class whose presence and conduct menaces and puts in jeopardy the aims and ideals of a civilization not yet removed from the tentative stages of construction. Such are the actual conditions created by the presence of the negro. And a difficulty which has beset the freedman in finding social adjustment has been the loss of forceful guidance. Left to his own volition, he has not sought, but rather has shunned, responsible social obligations.

No one denies that the negro is environed by a network of prejudices, many of which are a result of his acts. But were all racial antipathy instantaneously eradicated, he would still be inferior to the white man in many respects, not only on account of racial differences in color and development, but also because of whatever creates inequality, whether it be houses, lands, clothes, food, or personal dexterity and culture. The industrious man outstrips the lazy one; the thrifty, the spendthrift; the prudent, the imprudent; the capable, the incapable; the deliberative, the impetuous; the far-seeing, the short-sighted. Nevertheless, to insure the fulfilment of possibilities inherent in man, it is necessary that to each citizen there shall be accorded an equal chance with every other citizen, with equal protection and equal restraints imposed upon all. We have a right to ask of the governing authority equality of opportunity for all men, and it is all that we have a right to demand, or it to concede. No law can do more. It cannot create thrift, that is a matter of individual achievement; nor can it ordain individual success, for that comes in no case, other than through application, persistence, and judgment.

We are well-nigh deafened with factitious chatter about human equality; but if all men were created alike, endowed alike, and started in life alike, why is it that the negro lags so far behind his brethren in the race for mundane achievements, and what is the moving cause which induces him to prefer the place



and duty of a servant? Assuming that he has latent powers of moral recovery, why is it that neither moral suasion nor intelligent example has wrought any beneficent impression on his life? These are not idle questions, but grave problems, which are in evidence wherever the freed people are. Notwithstanding their ceaseless pretentious assumptions, or the fact that isolation forces them out of sympathy with their environment, negroes blindly persist in clinging to ideals fashioned by illiterate leaders, and evade contact with an intelligent civic and industrial fraternity. Isolation and segregation have wrought a conscious irreparable mischief to them, and neither force nor persuasion has hitherto induced them to join in common interests with other citizens. Hence, reprehensibly blind to causes and events, negroes do nothing more than prate about a denial of their rights. But what rights? The right of opportunity for honest living? for self-improvement? for capable service? Any interference or disregard of these rights justifies protest; but negroes are not claiming injustice on this score. Rather, they protest against any interference with their clannishness, their segregated living, their African habits of speech and conduct; and their chief ground of complaint is that white Americans will not admit their sable barbarities into fellowship. Why should they, when the sum total of negro contributions to the common treasury of American development is a pretentious imitation of civilization, a veneering over barbarous instincts? The aphorism,

“Scratch a Russian, and you find a Tartar,” may be fitly paraphrased by saying, “Strip off negro mannerisms, and you find an African savage.”

Say what we may to the contrary, negroes have a conscious sense of racial inferiority, which is evinced by a preference for flocking by themselves. Separate churches, schools, and social organizations are logical culminations of racial desire for segregation. These facts have an important bearing on the possibility of negro assimilation, since such segregation fixes in the negro mind a sense of personal degradation. The negro's preference for ecclesiastical separation is due to the fact that the ethical teachings of his cult are pitched on a lower key of spiritual conception than obtains elsewhere, and are wanting in vital force and practical service. No people, as negroes ought to know, have a right to be ignorant or degraded, or to assist in making others so. Nevertheless, it is a fact that most of the ignorance and degradation endured by the race is justly chargeable to a false system of Christianity, intent on blinding the consciences of men by burdening their souls with shams and pretence. The freedman's ethical notions, with their insidious and execrable teachings, as well as his false social ideas, inflict degradation on the race.

That the freedman's barbarous and vicious beliefs are repugnant to sober Christian thought, and incompatible with our civilization, is the inevitable conclusion of all intelligent investigation. Nor will he gain better conditions until he commits himself to the

guidance of such teachers as regard right conduct as the highest test of Christian character, and who consider Christ the most transcendent example of humanity. Because the negro's Christianity is wanting in this conception, it has no ability to arouse him for individual betterment or for social elevation. It is wholly without awakening vitality. Negro Christianity, moreover, will not heartily and honestly fraternize with religious organizations which are superior to it in intelligence and usefulness. Voluminous evidence bears this out, but for our purpose we need only cite the fact that, while in all our large cities there are white ministerial associations yet negro preachers are rarely found among them, though a generous welcome would be accorded them. The same observation is equally true regarding their white church attendance, exchanging pulpit ministrations, and social visitations. Hence, though the negro nurses a social grievance, on which he descants glibly in his segregation, yet in reality he shuns intelligent contact; he craves white association, after a fashion, but stealthily avoids the capable and refined in churches, schools, and everyday life.

It is no uncommon thing for whites and blacks to mingle in social life, yet it is almost universally true that when this happens the whites are the social inferiors of the blacks. For instance, the educated negro minister will extend to a commonplace, strolling white preacher the courtesies of his pulpit, when no persuasion will induce him to bestow a like invitation



on the settled pastor of a respectable white church within his own vicinage. So will the reputable negro matron, doubtless actuated by like motives, effusively entertain her white illiterate inferiors, though at the same time spurning all social advances from white superiors in education and refinement. Such being the case, it must be apparent that even where opportunity offers negroes will not associate with decent, self-respecting white people. Of course the most plausible solution of their attitude is that the decorum in speech and manner which such association involves is too great a strain on their undisciplined natures. Or that, while negroes crave white company, yet, conscious of their mental and social inferiority, they deliberately prefer a low to a high white development.

It is well known that the black man is morbidly sensitive regarding his color, for which he has an inbred aversion, and that he has a ceaseless yearning to supplant it with a lighter hue. Hence there are not wanting those among the freedmen who contend that no effectual solution of the negro problem can be reached until all traces of negroid lineage are blotted out through amalgamation. The folly of such contention is obvious, when we consider that a mass of white negroes would neither ameliorate nor eliminate racial antagonisms, but merely add to an already dangerous social element. There are already hundreds of thousands of white negroes in America, but in what respect does a white complexion add to

their value, or secure to them immunity from the exactions imposed on the black hues? Suppose all negroes should instantaneously undergo a change in color and become white; in what way would this remove the African earmarks of speech, and other personal characteristics? No process of physical amalgamation can change the mental and spiritual nature of the freedman. That negroes have a conscious sense of degradation, which they falsely attribute to their color, is shown by their eagerness to get as far as possible away from black shades. It is this craving for a light color and better hair for their offspring, which is responsible for many of the illegitimate children of negro motherhood. The freedmen seem to be unaware that in seeking to effect a system of racial equality on a physical basis, they enter a confession of their inferiority.

There is no doubt that judicious race amalgamation is capable of exercising a profound and far-reaching influence upon inferior types of people. Degenerate people are always improved and strengthened by an infusion of virile blood, but the benefits derived from wise race admixture are to be found in transmitted capacity, not color. The best examples of negro race admixture that have come under our observation are those which have an equal inheritance of characteristics from both white and black progenitors, with the initial amalgamation extending back to the third or fourth generation. In such cases we have a degree of intelligence, a poise of judgment,

and solidity of character wholly wanting in the extreme of the negro.

There is an impression in the minds of some superficial white people that the best developed and most manly types of negro people are those of pure blood. But such impressions are misconceptions, and unwarranted by existing facts. In the first instance, a native pure-blooded negro is rarely found in the United States, though we have some millions of black people in whom a greater or less infusion of white blood exists. Color, moreover, is not an infallible criterion of race identity; some very fair freedmen have more pronounced negroid characteristics than others who are very black. As we have already shown, the pure negro people are, by the very nature of their characteristic endowments, precluded from reaching a high degree of efficiency. Whatever the freedmen has achieved in the way of intelligence and character is due to alien qualities incorporated into his being through race amalgamation. His change in color is, however, merely an incident of miscegenation; the fundamental outcome is the displacement of characteristic instincts, and the introduction of new traits, a thing that is not always accomplished through physical admixture.

The physical transformation of the freedman is in process, but his mental and spiritual regeneration has scarcely begun, nor will it make headway until he is overwhelmed with an influx of ideas. Ideas are living things. Men die and institutions perish, while



these tangible realities survive the wreck of time. The redemption of the negro is impossible through any process of physical amalgamation ; it is possible and assured through a thorough assimilation of the thought and ideals of American civilization. The most intelligent and self-poised negro we have ever met was the slave and son of a Georgia master, who, though he could neither read nor write, yet for sound judgment, accurate understanding, intelligent knowledge, and wise discrimination of men and things, was surpassed by but few well-informed persons of any race. Here was an ideal man, with a genuine luminous soul, who was freed from the bonds of environment and heredity through a complete assimilation of the ideas and habits of a superior influence. Furthermore, though this man was a slave, he was respected and held in the highest esteem by the leading white citizens of the state, as a person of fearless courage and unswerving integrity, and we are confident that his color was never considered in the estimate of his character.

What one negro has done, all freedmen may and ought to do. Any enduring assimilation with the white American people is an impossible dream, so long as the negro segregates himself behind a rampart of offensive race instincts. He must either part forever with his savage inheritance, or be eternally submerged by American vigor and determination. Another fact that the freedmen may well bear in mind is that savage races become extinct as civiliza-

tion advances. Within the last three centuries millions of human beings have been utterly destroyed, not by war, but simply and solely on account of their inability to assimilate and incorporate into their life and living the higher civilization thrust upon them. \* This law of social contact cannot be set aside by bringing forward the plea that the savage negro has survived in the midst of a hostile civilization. The negro has thriven and increased in numbers, not because he possesses greater resistive power than other inferior races, or has acquired greater tenacity of existence here than in his native habitat. His survival is due to the fostering care with which slavery surrounded him during eight generations of servitude. Since the withdrawal of this supervision, the fact has been made clear that the freedman is not of a hardy type, but is a perishable product, who squanders his vital energies with reckless abandon.

For the benefit of those who adhere to the notion that physical changes will bring about national assimilation, the suggestion is advanced that there might be devised, under legal restrictions, an effectual method of color bleaching, just as some negroes have acquired a process of straightening their woolly locks. But however effectual might be the change in color, the deeper and more significant change in morals and sense could not be brought about through any mere physical transformation. The variegated freedmen would still be a negro in mind, soul, and body. Hence the fallacy of such claims as assume

that color changes will eradicate white antipathy to the black race.

It matters little what may have been the inceptive causes of racial prejudices in any locality, it is universally true that class distinctions eventually crystallize around cleavages in social development. A fitting and conspicuous example of this is furnished in the case of the white "crackers" of the South. Here we have a class representing hundreds of thousands of native Americans, of like hue but unlike development to their neighbors, who, by reason of their mental and social deterioration, are not only regarded as a serious menace to our civilization, but in many particulars are subjected to harsher caste restrictions than the blacks themselves. This condition of facts emphasizes our contention that heterogeneous races are capable of assimilation only through uniform culture and development in identical aims and ideals; and that any method of assimilation having for its object merely racial coalescence through color is false in premise and fatal in sequence.

We have never doubted that the negro could find his place in the American commonwealth if he would. The freedman, with his generations of indulgence in childish folly, ought to put away forever "childish things," through a realization that "character is destiny," and so get in touch with the best sentiment of his environment. He has now reached a point where a choice of two courses awaits him, and where the selection of either will inexorably fix



his status in the republic. One is to assimilate fully and thoroughly with his environment; the other is to remain, as now, in complete subordination to it, until exterminated. It does not necessarily follow that race extinction involves physical death through strife and carnage. That is an improbable event. Negro elimination, however, is just as inexorably decreed through the dry rot of mental and spiritual inanition; and to these forces he is fated to succumb, should he not yield ready obedience to the ethical and mental evolution in visible operation around him.

Many of the conditions which formerly encompassed the negro have been forgotten in the whirl of transitional events. Forty years ago our negro people were not citizens, and nearly all of them were in a condition of servitude. A single generation has elapsed since they were emancipated and vested with citizenship, and it was as late as 1870 before the Northern negroes were clothed everywhere with the functions of the electoral franchise and, for the first time in national history, allowed to vote. Let it also be remembered that negroes were excluded from the army at the beginning of the Civil War, and when enlisted at a later period were rated and paid as laborers, until their well-tested prowess raised them to the dignity of soldiers. Nor are we to forget that previous to the war the negroes of the United States were the pariahs of the American social structure, and as such subject to legal and social disabilities

to which their children are the veriest strangers. Massachusetts, now the foremost state of the Union in defence of human rights, passed an act just after the close of the Revolutionary War to expel all negroes from the commonwealth, and this too after they had fought for American independence, and freely mingled their blood with the white patriots of Lexington and Bunker Hill.

But Massachusetts was not alone in this respect, for race proscription ran high in all of the Northern colonies. In fact, in many of them, persons of color could neither own property, make contracts, nor testify against white persons; and it is only within the last third of a century that many of these restrictions have been removed. In Ohio, one of the states carved out of the territory consecrated to freedom by the Ordinance of 1787, and settled by New England emigrants, no negro, before the year 1848, could vote, or testify in a court of justice in an issue between white men, or where a white man was defendant in a suit brought by a negro. To recover on a contract between a white man and a negro, the latter was required to have such contract attested by white witnesses, otherwise it was void. No provision was made for the education of the children of the black race, or the care of their orphaned or insane, all of whom were excluded from the humanities of law. Nor were such unwarranted racial degradations mitigated until the law known as the "Visible Admixture Bill" was passed, which gave to negroes the

right to contract and testify, and which by a later supreme court decision rendered all who were half white, or mulattoes, eligible to vote. In the matter of public inns, railroad travel, and places of amusement, however, as well as schools and churches, there continued for many years to be severe and often forcible discrimination against them.

At a subsequent date the state of Illinois passed a law prohibiting the immigration of persons of color, with a penalty attached imposing a fine of fifty dollars, which, in default of payment, or for a second offence, decreed that such negro offenders were to be sold to the highest bidder as slaves. About the same period the legislature of Indiana proposed the adoption of a similar measure, which was the occasion of considerable excitement among the negro inhabitants of that state. In fact, from the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850 to the opening of the war, acute race discrimination was universal throughout the country. We have recalled these historical facts, not merely for the purpose of showing the onerous conditions to which free Northern negroes were subjected previous to our civil strife, nor ostentatiously to credit them with whatever of heroic endeavor they evinced in humble stations in securing the rights of manhood and womanhood; our aim is to emphasize seriously the need at the present day of like steady patience, intelligent forethought, and strenuous purpose, and to make known the fact that only through capable, self-reliant



methods is any ultimate uplifting of the race possible.

In this later day, however, it is the negro who excommunicates himself from all rational intercourse with his fellow-men, and in speech, song, and act persists in treating himself as one who has neither part nor lot in American manhood. He is an enfranchised subject of a commonwealth which recognizes no distinctions in persons, and he is invested with functions no whit inferior to those of other citizens of the nation. Yet, notwithstanding such unquestioned endowments of equality and responsibility, he refuses to take any intelligent step toward the performance of his duties. He does not identify himself with the aims and interests of the community of which he forms a part, and through such voluntary separation from his fellow-citizens he becomes an alien to the public welfare. At his place of residence he is not in evidence in the town meetings, township conventions, or precinct caucus, and in those rare instances where he puts in an appearance he is there simply as a silent observer or quiescent factor, and equally lacking in either helpful suggestions or capable criticisms. He stands aloof in ignorance of such questions as relate to sanitary drainage, the location of highways, the construction of bridges, the erection of schoolhouses, the disposition of public charities, or other matters of vital interest to a suburban and municipal welfare; therefore, such measures are always disposed of without

his intervention or coöperation. Hence, it becomes of little moment to any locality whether its freed citizens are scholars or idiots. It is this indifferent attitude toward the visible and subtle forces of life and nature in operation around them which constitutes one of the most perplexing features of the negro question. Where such apathy exists, there can be no effective response to any ameliorating movement. Inferiority, when conscious of its own weakness, is content to exist in subordination to superior dictation. The truth is that nowhere does the negro evince such capacity or fitness in performance as will give him parity of standing with his white fellow-men; and such facts as his inferiority in morals, intelligent judgment, discriminate knowledge, and general character are not to be set aside by flippant retort.

The core of the negro question is not his relation to the whites, the withholding of conferred rights, the exercise of the franchise. These are secondary. The supreme question is the possibility and feasibility of transforming the freedman and making a new creature of him. He has had an era of ignorance, an epoch of degradation, a surfeit of follies; he can and ought to awake to a sense of manliness and sober living. It is no mere idle speech to say that no nation, no race, and no man will succeed, who is not equipped and girded for swift endeavor and constant endurance. We want the freedman to know that no power or influence in heaven or earth, other than a demonstrated capacity of character and intelli-

gence, will ever secure him recognition and participation in American social and civic economy. Hence, we seriously advise negro manhood and womanhood to forget the past by facing the present and future with undaunted courage, but with an intelligent understanding of its duties and responsibilities. Only in that way will the social revolution, the moral reformation, and the spiritual regeneration of the race be consummated.

Any candid facing of the situation will show that the sentiment of the nation is unfavorable to the present status of the negro. There remains to him both the opportunity and the ability to reverse the popular judgment. Asked how, we could only say, by awakening in every freedman a conscious sense of duty, and belief that on his speech and act depends a recognition of the worth of his people. Were the notion once clearly realized that the burden of race redemption rested on each one himself, every negro then might become circumspect in conduct, faithful in service, truthful in endeavor, modest in pretensions. The adjustment and elimination of racial differences will finally come through sorting and sifting. The unfit will be pushed aside, but better so, that a nation may live. The fit among us, either of black or white people, are bound to survive. The freedman may lament his condition, and his indiscreet white friends may exploit chimerical schemes for his amelioration; both he and they may invite hopeless suppression by engaging in a struggle for equality



or supremacy; but so long as he is by instinctive preference a negro in thought and conduct, he is irrevocably doomed to social and political effacement.

It is obvious that much needless unrest has come to the freedman through false teachings in pulpit and schoolroom, which have simply excited in him unattainable desires, especially as regards political and social rights. The freedman should have been taught the nature and obligations of social and civic rights, and made to understand that in order to enjoy such rights he must be capably fitted to discharge the duties which are attached to them. Social affinities rarely lie along race or color lines, but are mainly governed by ulterior motives, such as the acquirement of personal advantage, social distinction, material gain, or political preferment. If negroes, therefore, occupy the vantage ground in any of these particulars, conciliation and association with them will as naturally follow as if they were white men, simply and solely for the reason that the law of social gravitation is based on reciprocity of benefits, and none other than that can enforce or enjoin social intercourse. No class of our American citizens is hedged about with invidious legal restrictions. As to what social customs may decree, that is irrelevant, a matter which in no wise concerns us here. All that the freedmen need to know is that with shams abandoned and realities acquired, there would come to them a universal recognition, and their genuine freedom would be nigh at hand.

To those who dissent from these conclusions, and point to the material gains of the freedmen as proof of their aptitude for national assimilation, we may say that it is a mischievous fallacy to assume that aggregated material social progress represents individual growth or the betterment of individual human nature. We have in the aggregated wealth of the United States a striking refutation of such conclusions. The material accumulations of individual negroes, therefore, furnish no criterion of the material progress of the race, and assuredly give no insight into their mental and moral advancement or deterioration. The truth is that mental and moral force, and not material hoarding, is the germ and basis of all human advancement. Furthermore, the influence of environment exerts a far greater influence on social development than all other causes combined. An intelligent environment insensibly educates an uninformed, amenable man. An illiterate atmosphere keeps him in ignorance; a virtuous environment holds in check evil inclinations and strengthens chaste principles; so a vicious atmosphere breeds immorality.

Mankind makes progress just to the extent that it heartily coöperates in wholesome association. The first essential for human betterment is virtuous and enlightened contact; the second, a determined desire to profit by such advantages. It is not poverty that shuts the negro out from consort with the American people, but his preference for isolation and seclusion,

and his persistent adherence to racial habits of grievous offence to modern ideals. Therefore, just as negro segregation breeds clannish prejudice and fosters racial degradation, so association with the world at large will beget hearty fellowship and wholesome desire for noble living. Negro redemption and assimilation with the American people depends entirely on his ability to absorb their ideals and conform to their standard of living. The processes which are constantly going on in our complex population in the extermination of foreign racial characteristics show the possibility of the ultimate assimilation of all foreign racial distinctions in citizens. The freedman can, if he will, be included in this civic transformation, and only through such national assimilation will negro individual consciousness be swallowed up in the universal consciousness, and his individual aims and selfishness absorbed in universal interest.

National assimilation, then, is possible for the negro. Nevertheless, there can be no absolute regeneration of the American freedman until his hereditary mental concepts have been uprooted, and replaced by the ideas and realities of modern civilization and culture. We contend for no mere imitation of the manner and speech of a dominant class, but a comprehensive understanding and assimilation of the ideas, impulses, and aspirations of a superior civilization, to such a degree as will easily enable the negro to breathe in its atmosphere, think in its language, speak its sentiments, and act as its inspirations impel. What the



freedman needs is to become socialized, by getting in touch with all wholesome environing activities. White people will associate with negroes whenever and wherever they fill the place and conform to the ideals of white men. In fact, despite racial prejudices, there is no section where there will not be found freedmen who are thoroughly respected by the whites and freely mingle with them. The aim of true national assimilation should be to bring about, regardless of physical colors or ethnological affiliations, agreement in the thought and action of all dissimilar parts of the body politic, and if we gauge aright the sentiment of the nation, that is the ultimate aim and purpose of its civilization. Negro assimilation, then, means a conception of and identification with the highest and best American ideals, without any implication of identity in racial physical phenomena,—this latter a consummation which, at this stage in his history, would be both undesirable and unattainable. We sincerely believe that, when the negro begins to bestir himself in present-day activities, and exhibits sound discretion and judicious tact in friendly intercourse with his fellow-men, much of the existing racial prejudice and caste distinctions will speedily disappear, through an acknowledged recognition of the brotherhood of capable achievement. But we are none the less certain that it will not be a blending of colors, but an absorption of ideas which will consummate negro assimilation to American civilization.

Race uplifting, however, can be accomplished in no other way than by a comprehensive individual development, carried on under conscious internal processes. The negro has never rendered whole-hearted obedience to lawful restraints. He was kept in physical subjection by slavery and fear of punishment, but he never acquired in servitude a clear conception of the need of self-discipline and respect for the law of right-doing. The removal of physical restraint by the emancipation of the freedmen has offensively brought into prominent activity the vulgar, self-asserting, levelling instincts previously latent in negro nature, which have since developed into supreme contempt for wholesome and orderly living. It is within the power of those freedmen who have deep convictions of their insufficiencies to exchange speedily sound for sense, words for ideas, shams for realities, shadows for substance, and every other childish encumbrance for stalwart character.

No matter what may be their degree of development, no people is exempt from the conditions of human nature, which are to-day as they were at the beginning, except as modified by intelligent forethought and skilful providence. Man's growth in civilization may be traced without much difficulty through the several stages of his development; from a state of savage robbery to barbaric warfare, from captive slavery to industrial serfdom, and thence through feudal tenure to personal and political freedom. Each transition marks a fundamental step in

human evolution. That which has been the experience of all men is true of the freedman. As to what he was and is, we have a fair knowledge, but as to what he will become no man can say. At present, however, this is obvious: he is legally tolerated in the North; while in the South, though decretal emancipation released him from lawful servile domination, he is still, none the less, an industrial serf. In neither section does he have acknowledged fellowship. What he needs from all is sympathy, coöperation, and genuine recognition of whatever manly worth he is possessed. To help negro men and women effectually, we must lift them to a higher plane of living, by disciplining their thoughts, increasing their knowledge, refining their feelings, cultivating their self-respect, awakening their aspirations, developing their energies, and opening to them every possible avenue for self-improvement. Nothing is so potent to accomplish these things as genuine friendship,—that kind of friendship which embodies true human brotherhood, to which every human creature is susceptible and responsive, because, as has been aptly said, “hunger and labor, seedtime and harvest, love and death,” are the inheritance of all races. Many, however, among both our white and black citizens, are far from realizing that the essence and aim of all life and living is the development of character, or that of all human virtues integrity is the chief among fundamentals. Nor do they perceive that, where we have personal integrity plus social integrity, the inevitable



result is fellowship of service that wipes out all antipathy to color or other physical distinctions.

Herbert Spencer says, "The tendency of all government is toward rigidity of structure." No doubt that is true, for there is an observed disposition in modern society not only to specialize, but to centralize, administrative functions. Our government is by no means perfect either in form or practice, and fresh vital knowledge derived through open-eyed and open-hearted observation will reveal many crude but remediable defects. Our first great need is an intelligently developed, homogeneous nation, not for aggressive warfare and foreign conquest, but for domestic security and industrial achievement. What we contend for is homogeneity in sentiment, impulse, conduct, and character. But in every process of successful national assimilation a twofold condition is required; one is a helpful reaching out on the part of a superior class; the other a willingness on the part of a submerged people to be transformed. Otherwise, national coalescence is impossible.

Count Tolstoi rightly teaches that justice, civilization, humanity, peace, and freedom are ideals capable of realization wherever political duties and human duties are made coincident functions. These conclusions are preëminently true in a republic where enfranchised citizenship makes every man a peer of the realm and a king in civil duty. But in order to exercise his sovereign functions aright he must have the intelligence of a king, or be dethroned by ignorance

or intelligent venality. Mere natural advantages, such as a great area of land, an equable climate, and dense population, do not in themselves make a great and strong people. On the contrary, civic aptitude and national growth depend on that degree of energy and intelligent judgment which is inherent in and exercised by the aggregated units of a given organism, great or small. In this respect the little Swiss Republic, with its diverse races, languages, and ethical beliefs, furnishes a conspicuous object-lesson in national assimilation and civic integrity; and one which might be studied with profit by governments of greater pretensions in dealing with complex questions affecting their internal economy.

It has been said that all nations are opportunists, and that all democratic governments are experimental and largely based on questions of self-interest. In this republic we have come to the parting of the ways. We have choice of being either the evangel of universal humanity, or the blind destroyer of ourselves and the ideas for which our country stands. The greatest danger which awaits our future existence is the growth and political corruption of our cities. Was it not cities that destroyed Rome and Greece, and is it improbable that they may here undermine and uproot American civil liberty? Have we not ample evidence of the existence and effect of civic corruption in the lawlessness that reigned in the South during and after the war, when many people plundered, murdered, and pillaged for private

gain? Is there not conclusive proof of widespread official corruption during the reconstructive period, when crafty Northern white men and Southern impoverished aristocrats joined hands in piratical plunder, and through a conspiracy of theft and a carnival of felonies wrought reckless havoc with the credit of states and the property of citizens? Nor shall we be rid of these evils so long as integrity is derided, and mammon reigns and dominates social and civic life.

The freedman is an American citizen and an element of a civilization which, in its higher reaches and loftier moods, stands for personal purity, truth, character, and righteousness. But the fact that unqualified negroes are deprived of the elective franchise is not to be taken as an expression of race prejudice; nor have they a right to put such exclusion on the ground of color. A notable example of disfranchised citizens obtains in the District of Columbia, whose white and black inhabitants are both denied the right to vote or exercise the least function of local self-government, and where, of all places in the United States, the negroes are best qualified for the exercise of civic functions. What we desire to emphasize is that in no organism is there such a thing as unrestricted universal suffrage; for not only is enfranchisement a matter of expediency, but suffrage is not essential to citizenship. The right of universal suffrage is not granted by the Constitution of the United States, and the subjection of inferior



racess or individuals to government jurisdiction, while not permitting them to exercise electoral functions, is no denial of inherent rights. It would be well for those who dissent from these conclusions to bear in mind that this nation is honestly striving to solve the problem of human self-government, with manhood and character as its established ideals of sovereign equality.

There is no doubt but that some very beneficent changes might be wrought in our administrative policy, especially in the matter of suffrage. Our negro people are enfranchised citizens, who, when competent to exercise such functions, should neither evade their civic duty nor permit any interference with their political obligations; but otherwise they and all other persons, without regard to past conferred privileges, who are clearly unfit rightly to discharge their electoral functions should be disfranchised. Such a step would be no novel infringement on the liberties of citizens. Just here we may note that both Pennsylvania and North Carolina, in the latter part of the thirties, disfranchised their free negro inhabitants, though they had previously enjoyed the privilege of voting in common with their white fellow-citizens. There were also, at an early age, many free negroes in Virginia and the other colonies who, as late as 1723, had all the rights and privileges of freemen, including the right of the franchise. There is every evidence, however, to show that a lack of thrift and moral sobriety characterized the freedmen of the sev-

enteenth century as completely as it does his descendants of the nineteenth century. These facts are stated in order to emphasize our conviction that none of the essential rights of the freedman are imperilled by withholding from him franchise functions. What is it that makes for good government, other than a love of order, decency, and the ability to subordinate self and self-interest for the common welfare? — a thing the negro has not yet done. Citizen suffrage is in our judgment a matter of national interest, and the right to exercise it should be conferred by national authority.

What are the facts? All men are not equal in intelligence and capacity, and the larger number of them are unfit to be intrusted with self-governing functions in a highly organized government. No citizen, therefore, of this republic should be permitted to exercise the privilege of the franchise who cannot read and write the English language, and who has not read and fairly understood the Constitution of the state wherein he resides, and the Constitution of the United States. Suffrage, rightly viewed, is a trust as well as a duty. Every voter should regard himself as a responsible member of a civil corporation, a stockholder in the body politic, a trustee for the disfranchised, a delegated custodian of the rights, interests, and welfare of every non-participant in municipal government. Now, as the inaptitude of the negro for self-government has been demonstrated, the illiterate and de-

based freedman should not be permitted to vote. Further than that, the incapables of every race and color should be irrevocably disfranchised. There is no need, however, that the Fifteenth Amendment should be repealed, but there is absolute need of its modification. Vague and ambiguous as it now is, it ought to be made clear, definite, and conclusive in application. Hence as the Fourteenth Constitutional Amendment fixed the status of American citizenship, so the Fifteenth Amendment should decree the qualification of voters, with enfranchisement based solely on character, intelligence, and a capable identification with public affairs. American citizenship then would know no distinction in color, race, creed, or section, in its determination for capable and efficient administrative control. While suffrage, in our judgment, is a matter of national interest, and its right of exercise should be conferred by national authority, it is evident, in view of existing conditions in public affairs, that, whatever need there may be for revising suffrage legislation, the several states will not, of their own volition, adjust the question of suffrage on any equitable and uniform basis. We may suggest then, that, by making the individual voter directly amenable to the Federal government, we shall have taken a long stride toward making society homogeneous; besides, it will then be no idle aphorism to say that a crime against citizenship is a crime against the nation.

We conclude a discussion in which we have sought



to solve complex problems, — not in the depths of racial bigotry, but elevated by fraternal patriotism, — by observing that our indigenous toilers, the brawny blacks, have both place and duty in American development. Their increasing millions will yet prove strength or weakness to our composite civilization in exact proportion as we are wise or foolish in our treatment of them. Wisely viewed, negro efficiency is bound up with transformation of the race, — a mental and social evolution, wherein dreams will be tossed aside for realities, death for life, and empty speech for ideas aflame with immortality. In a word, a radical regeneration, not in color, but in conduct, is the absolute need of our freedmen.

The future American negro will part, undoubtedly, with many of his racial characteristics as he approximates in color and conduct the white race. Even now many persons of negroid ancestry are so fair in color that they readily pass for white people, and marry among that class without exciting the slightest suspicion as to their mixed race identity. Furthermore, white American marriages are constantly contracted with every variety of the colored races, and the fruit of such unions is certain to exert, hereafter, a considerable influence upon many existing social perplexities. The inevitable outcome of a perfect blending of our heterogeneous peoples would be the development of a composite type of American people of incomparable strength and beauty, who, if they clung fast to their best ethical in-

stincts, would attain such heights as would make our country what it was ordained to be, — the cradle of world-wide liberty, the citadel of human fraternity, and the seat and centre of universal righteousness.

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